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MEMOIRS

OF

ANGELUS POLITIANUS,

JOANNES PICUS OF MIRANDULA,

ACTIUS SINCERUS SANNAZARIUS,

PETRUS BEMBUS, HIERONYMUS FRAÇASTORIUS,

MARCUS ANTONIUS FLAMINIUS,

AND

THE AMALTHEI:

TRANSLATIONS FROM THEIR POETICAL WORKS:

AND

Notes & Observations

CONCERNING

OTHER LITERARY CHARACTERS OF THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

The Second Edition, greatly augmented.

BY

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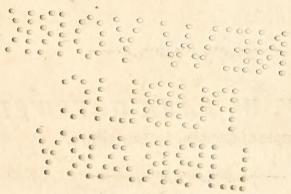

PREFACE.

THE interval comprehended between the dawn of learning after a long night of ignorance and barbarism, and the time when it attained its meridian splendour, forms a period highly interesting, no less to the philosophical than the classical enquirer. Its importance has already been fully recognized; and the splendid productions of two classic pens, have recently served rather to stimulate than to allay the curiosity of the public.*

Those distinguished scholars who form the subjects of the following pages, are justly numbered among the brightest luminaries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; and the restoration of letters, which was attended with effects so beneficial to society, is in some degree to be attributed to their efforts and example. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that the authentic particulars of their lives and literary exertions are principally to be drawn in detached and scanty portions, from volumes of rare oc-

* *Mr. Roscoe's "Life of Lorenzo de' Medici:" and "Memoirs of the House of Medici, &c. translated from the French of Mr. Tenhove, with notes and observations by Sir Richard Clayton, Bart."*

currence, and which lie concealed in situations not always easy of access. If, from the materials which have occurred to the author in his researches, he should appear to have selected too sparingly — his plea is, that he preferred this extreme, to that of entering into a minuteness of detail, which might probably fatigue rather than interest the reader.

Of the authenticity of these biographical and literary notices the intelligent reader will form an estimate from the authorities which have been carefully adduced. It could afford little satisfaction to those who desire to exercise their own judgment, to peruse a collection of mere anecdotes unsanctioned by the vouchers of historic truth.

Much valuable information respecting these learned men might probably be obtained from sources which the author has not yet had an opportunity of exploring. "Videlicet hoc illud est præcipuè studiorum genus, quod vigiliis augescat — ut cui subinde ceu fluminibus ex decursu, sic accedit ex lectione minutatim quo fiat uberius." He will continue to feel sufficient interest in such a subject, to render him desirous of doing it more justice hereafter, if his present essay should be favourably received by the candid public.*

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* *Ang. Politiani "Miscellaneor. Præfatio."*

PREFACE

to the

SECOND EDITION.

THE favourable reception with which the former edition of these "MEMOIRS" has been honoured by the public, having encouraged me to prepare a second edition, it has been my anxious wish, by rendering the work more ample and compleat, to recommend it to future patronage. In this attempt, I have at once gratified my own predilection for enquiries of this liberal kind, and endeavoured to fulfil a task which I formerly pledged myself to undertake.

If biographical researches and the personal histories of those, who by pre-eminence in wisdom, by works of taste or improvements in science, have pleasingly distinguished themselves from the great mass of mankind, are

fraught with instruction and delight; those have an especial claim to this character which are connected with the period when Reason began to re-assert her power; when the capabilities of mind and the energies of genius, roused from long torpor and inaction, seemed to have acquired a kind of juvenile vigour from their slumbers, and a noble ardour for precedency in intellectual attainments prompted so many to exertion in the same career. "This was the happy age, when Italy in particular, appeared to be animated with the spirit of ancient Greece; when the most laudable studies, the sublimest sciences, the most valuable arts were cultivated in that genial soil with such a degree of felicity, that the human mind seemed to have called forth its utmost powers; and genius could scarce be imagined capable of higher perfection, or art of nobler achievements. In these days many individuals appeared, whose Latin compositions in verse and prose, are distinguished by the genuine flavour of the Augustan age; whilst in their native language historians and poets composed works that might challenge the finest productions of antiquity,—architects, painters, and sculptors arose, whose performances will perhaps be excelled by those of no succeeding times. This was the period when scholars engaged with enthusiasm in every important depart-

ment of knowledge, when considerable advances were made in every walk of sound learning, and new paths of science were pointed out to the literary and philosophical investigators of succeeding ages. This too was the period of classic taste and elegant refinement, when with an emulous and liberal curiosity, the eye of erudition began to contemplate the medals, sculptures, and other proud spoils and precious relics of antiquity."*

An admired author † of our own days, has however, justly observed, that "biographers in the pursuit of information, are naturally betrayed into minute researches," that "the curiosity of the reader is seldom proportioned to that of the writer in this species of composition," and that "every incident relating to a favourite character, which the mind has long contemplated with attention, acquires importance." A consciousness of these truths, and other considerations, induced me to avoid entering, in the former edition, into various particulars, which a more implicit confidence in my own judgment or compliance with my own wishes would otherwise have persuaded

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* Maffei degli Scrittori Veronesi, Lib. iv. §. 1.

† Warton, Life of Sir Thomas Pope. Lond. 8vo. 1772, Pref. p. 1.

me not to neglect. At present, I feel less hesitation in entering somewhat more particularly into *minutiæ*, in which the public has manifested a flattering interest. The notices concerning Politian and the scholars of his age have been very considerably enlarged, and the part will, it is presumed, be found better arranged and methodized. Some of the memoirs of other scholars who form the subjects of this volume have been written anew, and all of them more or less augmented. Some passages of the former volume have been, for obvious reasons, transposed; others, but those of inconsiderable importance, have been suppressed, generally to make room for more ample details, or particulars that appeared more interesting.

The Memoirs of Prince Giovanni Pico of Mirandola, which constitute a considerable part of the augmentations found in the present edition, are wholly new. If an author might be permitted to estimate the value of any portion of his work by the comparative labour and research bestowed upon it, I should presume to flatter myself that this part of mine would be received as a valuable improvement. The numberless eulogies on the character of Picus are so many indisputable suffrages to the interest which attaches to his history: for

surely the concurrent testimony of successive generations cannot err. Whence then can it have happened, that whilst almost every other scholar of eminence in these times, has found a historian more or less qualified to preserve his memory and transactions from oblivion, nothing that merits the name of a particular biographical account of this amiable and learned nobleman has hitherto appeared? Can any satisfactory reason for this neglect be assigned? — unless it was supposed that the materials were so scanty, or so dispersed, that either like the leaves of the Sybil, they were incapable of being collected and reduced to order; or that their paucity and indistinctness would not recompense the labour of such an undertaking.

The correspondence of Picus, as well as that of Politian and the scholars of his age, from which many of the notices concerning Picus are extracted, is totally destitute of chronological arrangement. Many of the letters are without dates; and nothing but a patient and diligent collation of incidental passages and facts could enable a writer to remedy these defects. From these however, and similar works, much more may be discovered of the personal and literary history of Picus, than even my own sanguine

hopes had encouraged me to expect. Imperfect indeed, it must be acknowledged, still remains the account of Picus with which I have been enabled to present the reader; and far short of the interest, which I flatter myself he would feel in a more minute history of so extraordinary a character. But the particulars now laid before the public, have at least the recommendation of indisputable veracity, as derived from the most authentic sources: they have the recommendation of novelty, as constituting the earliest attempt to bring him forward in his genuine character, which has, I believe, yet appeared in any language: and the judicious reader will prefer an imperfect biographical sketch, recommended by truth, to any supplementary embellishments added by the pencil of fiction or conjecture.

Picus, I may further observe, as exhibited in the sombrous and partial portrait of his nephew Giovan-Francesco, with all his extraordinary moral and intellectual attainments, appears to little more advantage than a tasteless *scholastic*, or a misguided enthusiast. Politian has been unjustly represented as an immoral person and an infidel. The strict ties by which these scholars are here shewn to have been connected, their indissoluble amity, and their congenial studies, may serve to vin-

dicate their mutual fame; and prove PICUS to have combined with fervent piety the urbanity and liberal science of the gentleman;—POLITIAN to have recognised in the midst of his classical, poetical, and critical pursuits, the more important obligations of morality and religion.

Of the Latin and Italian poems which occur in this volume, (many of which are accompanied with translations) some owe their introduction to my opinion of their excellency; others are brought forwards, less as the happiest efforts of their respective authors, than as serving to illustrate their histories. The greater part of the translations will, on comparison with the originals, be found of the *close* kind: some few are confessedly *diffuse*, and partake more of the nature of paraphrases. Whether the close or the diffuse mode of poetical translation be preferable, I take not upon myself to decide. We have examples of great respectability in both. Our language certainly possesses a facility of compression or dilatation which renders it so far competent to both, that if an author fail in either, he alone must be responsible.

The poetical translations which appeared in the former edition are here reprinted with

very little alteration. The notes in this volume afford ample information concerning many scholars of great eminence, who appear on the present occasion only accidentally subordinate: but as repeated mention of some of them frequently occurs in other parts of the work, by the assistance of an index now first annexed, the reader may at pleasure connect these scattered particulars, and bring every thing relating to the same individual under a distinct review.

MEMOIRS,

&c.

WHILE *Death exults* LORENZO! *o'er thy bier,*
And leads triumphant the funereal throng,
High thron'd on sable car;—his startled ear
Deep tones pervade of elegiac song.
He turns,—when lo! a bard, with frenzied air,
In keenest anguish sweeps the golden strings:
Wild is the dirge, in strains that breathe despair,
As thus,—unmindful of himself, he sings:
"Ye Gods! could worth commend affliction's cry,
Could hearts celestial be with pity mov'd,
Yet had he liv'd, had liv'd his people's joy,
Our tears accepted, and our suit approv'd."
Astonish'd, checks his steeds the indignant Power;
His rankling breast the deep offence retains
That Orpheus once could Erebus explore,
And snatch one victim from his drear domains.
"Thou too, presumptuous bard!" he sternly cries,
With spells harmonious would'st my realm invade;
Perish the hand that thus our power defies,
And rashly dares recal a fleeting shade."
He said,—and gives the wound; the golden lyre
As sorrowing, vibrates in the master's hand;
So fall'st thou, sweetest of the tuneful choir,
POLITIAN! *glory of the Ausonian land.*

Petri Bembi in obitum Angeli Politiani.

MEMOIRS

OF

POLITIAN.

ANGELUS POLITIANUS was born July 14, 1454, at Monte Pulciano in Tuscany; and from the name of this town, in Latin Mons Politianus, he derived the surname of Politiano. His father was a Doctor of the civil law. His name, according to M. Baillet, was Benedictus de Cinis, or de Ambroginis; for he considers the former as a corruption of the latter.

Politian, whom for his early indications of extraordinary genius, M. Baillet has enumerated among his "Enfans célébres par leurs études" had the advantage of Christoforo Landino's instructions in the Latin language. His preceptor in the Greek was Andronicus of Thessalonica. From Joannes Argyropylus he imbibed the principles of the Peripatetic philosophy; and from Marsilius Ficinus those of the Platonic: but in the early part of his life he devoted his attention chiefly to the Muses; and preferred the gay and pleasing study of Poesy to the austere discipline of the Philosophic schools. The means of Politian's

Jugemens des Savans, Tom 5, premiere partie, p. 87, 12mo. Amst. 1725.

education, as some assert, were furnished almost from his childhood, by the family of the Medici; and his early obligations of this nature to Lorenzo de' Medici in particular are clear, both from his own testimony, and that of his contemporaries. He was, however, more particularly recommended to public notice and the esteem of his illustrious patrons, by his poem, entitled "Stanze per la Giostra di Giuliano de' Medici." This poem is supposed to have been written when the author had scarcely passed his fourteenth year. Its abrupt termination evidently proves it to be an unfinished performance. Yet thus abandoned by its author to neglect, and perhaps considered by him as a mere playful effort of childish genius, unworthy of subsequent revisal or completion, if it did not, like the vernacular frolics of Boccaccio's genius, contribute more than his classical productions to perpetuate its author's fame, it has at least done this in a very considerable degree. The best Italian critics constantly speak of the "Stanze" of Politian in terms of the highest eulogy. One of the most distinguished of them ranks this poem, unfinished as it is, amongst the most elegant compositions which Italian poesy can boast. As a refiner and improver of his vernacular tongue, the juvenile efforts of Politian appear to have resembled those of our own celebrated Pope; and perhaps, all circumstances considered, his success was not inferior. "It is matter of real astonishment," observes the critic above cited, "that at a time when those who had been longest exercised in the practice of versification, could not divest themselves of their antiquated rusticity, a youthful poet,

Tiraboschi Storia della Poesia Italiana. Vol. II. p. 211 of the elegant edition of Mr. Mathias. 12mo. London, 1803.

who had scarce begun to touch the lyre, should be able to leave them so far behind."

On this occasion, Politian writing in his native language, and expatiating in terms familiar to him, gives an unrestrained scope to his genius, which here stands displayed, in all the rich, unpruned wildness of juvenile luxuriancy. A more convincing proof could scarcely have been given, either of an exuberant imagination, and a fancy, by nature romantically poetical, or of a mind stored by observation, with a wonderful variety of adventitious and classical imagery. Richardson, in his celebrated work on painting, asserts that Politian's genius was of special assistance to Raffaelle d' Urbino in many of his exquisite productions. The poem in question might alone suffice to justify such an observation; and will undoubtedly, be perused with great advantage, by the emulous votary of the sister art. Almost every Stanza is a picture, and manifests that the author wanted none of those requisites which nature can bestow, to qualify him also for the highest eminence in that admired art.

Vide Menckenium in Vitâ Politiani, who cites the French edition, Tom 3, p. 334.

In this poem, Politian's description "dello Regno d' Amore," forms a kind of whole, which in some degree consoles the reader for the interrupted state of the main argument. Cupid having evinced that the heart of Giuliano, notwithstanding the bold ridicule and sarcastic contempt he had frequently expressed for the tender passion, was not invulnerable; the poet leaves his young hero, under the covert of night and solitude, to indulge those sighs, to which his wounded bosom had ceased to be a stranger. He commences his beautiful Episode in the following terms.

Ma fatto Amor la sua bella vendetta,
Mossesi lieto per l' aere a volo,
E ginne al regno di sua madre in fretta,
Ov' è de' picciol suoi fratei lo stuolo:
Al regno, ove ogni Grazia si diletta;
Ove Beltà, di fiori al crin fa brolo:
Ove tutto lascivo dietro a Flora
Zefiro vola, e la verde erba infiora.

Or canta meco un po' del dolce regno,
Erato bella, che il nome hai d' Amore.
Tu sola, benchè casta, puoi nel regno
Sicura entrar di Venere e d' Amore.
Tu de' versi amorosi hai sola il regno:
Teco sovente a cantar viensi Amore:
E posta giù dagli omer la faretra,
Tenta le corde di tua bella cetra.

Vagheggia Cipri un dilettoso monte,
Che del gran Nilo i sette corni vede
All primo rosseggiar dell' Orizzonte,
Ove poggiar non lice a mortal piede.
Nel giogo un verde colle alza la fronte;
Sott' esso aprico un lieto pratel siede;
U' scherzando tra' fior lascive aurette,
Fan dolcemente tremolar l' erbette.

Corona un muro d' or l' estreme sponde
Con valle ombrosa di schietti arboscelli,
Ove in su' rami fra novelle fronde
Cantan gli lor amor soavi augelli.
Sentensi un grato mormorio dell' onde,
Che fan duo freschi e lucidi ruscelli,
Versando dolce con amar liquore,
Ove arma l' oro de' suoi strali Amore.

Nè mai le chiome del giardino eterno
Tenera brina, o fresca neve inbianca:
Ivi non osa entrar ghiacciato verno:
Non vento l' erbe, o gli arboscelli stanca:
Ivi non volgon gli anni il lor quaderno;
Ma lieta Primavera mai non manca,
Che i suoi crin biondi e crespi all' aura spiega,
E mille fiori in ghirlandetta lega.

Lungo le rive i frati di Cupido,
Che solo usan ferir la plebe ignota,
Con alte voci e fanciullesco grido
Aguzzan lor saette ad una cota.
Piacere, Insidia posati in su'l lido
Volgono il perno alla sanguigna rota:
Il fallace Sperar col van Disio
Spargon nel sasso l' acqua del bel rio.

Dolce Paura, e timido Diletto,
Dolci Ire, e dolci Paci insieme vanno:
Le Lagrime si lavan tutto il petto,
E' l fiumicello amaro crescer fanno:
Pallore smorto, e paventoso Affetto
Con Magrezza si duole, e con Affanno:
Vigil Sospetto ogni sentiero spia:
Letizia balla in mezzo della via.

Voluttà con Bellezza si gavazza:
Va fuggendo il Contento, e siede Angoscia:
Il cieco Errore or qua or là svolazza:
Percotesi il Furor con man la coscia:
La Penitenzia misera stramazza,
Che del passato error s' è accorta poscia:
Nel sangue Crudeltà lieta si ficca:
E la Disperazion se stessa impicca.

Tacito Inganno, e simulato Riso
Con Cenni astuti, messaggier de' cuori,
E fissi Sguardi con pietoso viso
Tendon lacciuoli a' giovani tra' fiori.
Stassi col volto in su la palma assiso
Il Pianto in compagnia de' suoi Dolori:
E quinci e quindi vola senza modo
Licenzia non ristretta in alcun nodo.

Cotal milizia i tuoi figli accompagna,
Venere bella, madre degli Amori.
Zefiro il prato di rugiada bagna,
Spargendolo di mille vaghi odori:
Ovunque vola, veste la campagna
Di rose, gigli, violette, e fiori:
L' erba di sua bellezza ha maraviglia;
Bianca, cilestra, pallida, e vermiglia.

Trema la Mammoletta verginella
Con occhi bassi, onesta e vergognosa:
Ma vie più lieta, più ridente, e bella
Ardisce aprire il seno al Sol la Rosa:
Questa di verdi gemme s' incappella:
Quella si mostra allo sportel vezzosa:
L' altra, che'n dolce foco ardea pur ora,
Languida cade, e'l bel pratello infiora.

L' Alba nutrica d' amoroso nembo
Gialle, sanguigne, candide Viole:
Descritto ha il suo dolor Jacinto in grembo:
Narciso al rio si specchia, come suole:
In bianca vesta con purpureo lembo
Si gira Clizia pallidetta al Sole:
Adon rinfresca a Venere il suo pianto:
Tre lingue mostra Croco, e ride Acanto.

Mai rivestì di tante gemme l' erba
La novella stagion, che 'l mondo avviva.
Sovr' esso il verde colle alza superba
L' ombrosa chioma, ù il sol mai non arriva;
E sotto vel di spessi rami serba
Fresca e gelata una fontana viva
Con sì pura, tranquilla, e chiara vena,
Che gli occhi non offesi al fondo mena.

L' acqua da viva pomice zampilla,
Che con suo arco il bel monte sospende;
E per fiorito solco indi tranquilla
Pingendo ogni sua orma al fonte scende;
Dalle cui labbra un grato umor distilla,
Che 'l premio di lor ombre agli arbor rende.
Ciascun si pasce a mensa non avara;
E par che l' un dell' altro cresca a gara.

Now in his proud revenge exulting, high
Through fields of air LOVE speeds his rapid flight,
And in his Mother's realm the treacherous boy
Rejoins his kindred band of flutterers light;
That realm of each bewitching Grace the joy,
Where Beauty wreathes with sweets her tresses bright
Where Zephyr importunes on wanton wing
Flora's coy charms, and aids her flowers to spring.

Thine ERATO! to Love's a kindred name,
Of Love's domains instruct the bard to tell:
To thee, chaste Muse! alone 'tis giv'n to claim
Free ingress there, secure from every spell:
Thou rul'st of soft amours the vocal frame,
And Cupid, oft, as childish thoughts impel,
To thrill with wanton touch its golden strings,
Behind his winged back his quiver flings.

A mount o'erlooks the charming Cyprian Isle,
Whence, towards the morn's first blush, the eye sublime
Might reach the sevenfold course of mighty Nile;
But ne'er may mortal foot that prospect climb.
A verdant hill o'erhangs its highest pile,
Whose base a plain, that laughs in vernal prime;
Where gentlest airs, midst flowers and herbage gay,
Urge o'er the quivering blade their wanton way.

A wall of gold secures the utmost bound;
And dark with viewless shade, a woody vale:
There, on each branch with youthful foliage crown'd,
Some feather'd songster chaunts his amorous tale;
And join'd, in murmurs soft, with grateful sound,
Two rivulets glide pellucid through the dale;
Beside whose streams, this sweet, that bitter found,
His shafts of gold Love tempers for the wound.

No flow'rets here decline their wither'd heads,
Blanch'd with cold snows, or fring'd with hoar-frost sear;
No winter, wide his icy mantle spreads;
No tender scion rends the tempest drear:
Here spring eternal smiles, nor varying leads
His change quadruple the revolving year:
Spring! with a thousand blooms his brows entwin'd,
His auburn locks light fluttering in the wind.

The inferior band of Loves,—a childish throng,
Tyrants of none, save hearts of vulgar kind,
Each other gibing with loquacious tongue,
On stridulous stones their barbed arrows grind:
Whilst Pranks and Wiles, the rivulet's marge along,
Ply at the whirling wheel their task assign'd;
And on the sparkling stone, in copious dews,
Vain Hopes and vain Desires the lymph effuse.

There pleasing Pain, and fluttering, fond Delight,
Sweet Broils, Caresses sweet, together go:
Sorrows that hang their heads in doleful plight,
And swell with tears the bitter streamlet's flow:
Paleness all wan, and dreaming still of slight,
Affection fond, with Leanness, Fear, and Woe:
Suspicion, casting round his peering eye,
And o'er the midway dancing, wanton Joy.

Pleasure with Beauty gambols; light in air
Bliss soars inconstant; Anguish sullen sits;
Blind Error flutters, bat-like, here and there;
And Frenzy raves, and strikes his thigh by fits.
Repentance, of past follies late aware,
Her fruitless penance there not intermits:
Her hand with gore fell Cruelty distains;
And seeks Despair in death to end his pains.

Gestures and Nods, that inmost thoughts impart,
Illusions silent, Smiles that guile intend,
The Glance, the Look, that speak th' impassion'd heart,
Mid flow'ry haunts, for Youth their toils suspend:
And never from his Griefs Complaint apart,
Prone on his palm his face is seen to bend:
Now hence,—now thence,—in unrestrained guise,
Licentiousness on wing capricious flies.

Such ministers thy Progeny attend,
Venus! fair mother of each fluttering pow'r:
A thousand odours from those fields ascend,
While Zephyr brings in dews the pearly shower;
Fann'd by his flight, what time their incense blend
The Lily, Violet, Rose, or other flower;
And views with conscious pride the exulting scene
Its mingled azure, vermil, pale, and green.

The trembling Pansy virgin fears alarm;
Downward her modest eye she blushing bends:
The laughing Rose, more specious, bold, and warm,
Her ardent bosom not from Sol defends:
Here, from the capsule bursts each opening charm;
Full-blown, the invited hand she here attends:
Here, she who late with fires delightful glow'd,
Droops languid, with her hues the mead bestrew'd.

In show'rs descending, courts th' enamour'd air
The Violet's yellow, purple, snowy hues:
Hyacinth! thy woes, thy bosom's marks declare:
His form Narcissus in the stream yet views.
In snowy vest, but fring'd with purple glare,
Pale Clytie still the parting sun pursues.
Fresh o'er Adonis, Venus pours her woes,
Acanthus smiles; her lovers Crocus shows.

When vernal suns awake the slumbering year,
Not half so glorious blooms the vest of May.
Proudly to view the height is seen to rear
Its foliag'd front, excluding far the day:
Skreen'd by whose shade, from Sol's obtrusive glare
A frigid fountain wells its living way
So pure, so tranquil, in its mirrour bright
Nought from its base withholds the illuded sight.

Where many a chink pervades the native stone;
And the arch'd rock, self-scoop'd, a grot suspends:
Through flow'r-fring'd channels, first descending prone,
Each scanty rill to one bright centre tends.
Thence, by the liquid mass the brink o'ergrown,
To each protecting tree its tribute sends:
Each quaffs the draught, those liberal stores supply,
And each with each, in verdure seems to vie.

But to follow Politian in his minute description of all the varied scenery of this enchanted ground, would be a difficult task: nor would it be a less arduous undertaking, to delineate after him, all those ornamental representations, with which sculpture through the medium of his prolific fancy, has enriched the palace of Venus. His description of the Goddess herself, rising from the Ocean, was perhaps a favorite subject with the author; who has also tried his poetical pencil with it on another occasion.

Vid. Epigram. Græca Politiani.

Vera la schiuma, e vero il mar direste
Il nicchio ver, vero il soffiar de venti.
La Dea negli occhi folgorar vedreste,
E'l ciel riderle attorno, e gli elementi:
L' Ore premer l' arena in bianche veste,
L' aura increspar li crin distesi e lenti:
Non una, non diversa esser lor faccia;
Come par che a sorelle ben confaccia. (a)

Giurar potresti, che dell' onde uscisse
La Dea premendo con la destra il crino,
Con l' altra il dolce pomo ricoprisse;
E stampata dal piè sacro e divino,
D' erba e di fior la rena si vestisse:
Poi con sembiante lieto e pellegrino
Dalle tre Ninfe in grembo fosse accolta,
E di stellato vestimento involta.

Questa con ambe man le tien sospesa
Sopra l' umide trecce una ghirlanda

(a) ——— Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen, qualem decet esse sororum.
Ovid. Metam. Lib. ii. 11, 12.

D' oro e di gemme orientali accesa:
Quella una perla agli orecchi accomanda:
L' altra al bel petto e bianchi omeri intesa
Par che ricchi monili intorno spanda,
De' qua' solean cerchiar lor proprie gole,
Quando nel ciel guidavan le carole.

Indi paion levate in ver le spere
Seder sopra una nuvola d' argento:
L' aer tremante ti parria vedere
Nel duro sasso, e tutto 'l ciel contento:
Tutti li Dii di sua beltà godere,
E del felice letto aver talento:
Ciascun sembrar nel volto maraviglia,
Con fronte crespa, e rilevate ciglia.

REAL seem'd the foam, light floated o'er the sea
The well dissembled shell by breezes fann'd:
Flash'd from the Goddess' eye, a living ray
Illum'd the smiling heav'n, the main, the land.
Attendant Hours in snowy vests, display
Their tresses to the wind, and tread the strand:
Not one their air—nor varying yet in mien;
In each fair face a sister's likeness seen.

The Goddess' self (such skill the sculptor's) there
Emergent moves; from her wet hair the brine
Her right hand wrings; the left her bosom fair
Protects; spontaneous greens and flow'rs combine
Their gayest hues, her earliest steps to share:
With smiling grace, nor less than forms divine,
Three duteous nymphs receive the stranger blest,
And with a spangled robe her limbs invest.

This with both hands a braid (distinct to sight
Where gold with orient gems its lustre blends)
Holds o'er her dripping tresses; sparkling bright
A pearl, this from her beauteous ear suspends:
Her shoulders o'er, and bosom snowy white,
The circling brilliants this with care extends.
Such their attire; with such their charms are crown'd,
When in the dance they tread celestial ground.

Now slowly rising to yon upper sphere
Sublime they soar, their seat a silver cloud:
Soft, fluttering zephyrs agitate the air,
And æther smiles, of such a burthen proud.
Each God with transport hails a guest so fair,
His bosom's secret wish by looks avow'd:
(Though mute the stone) such eloquence imply
The front contracted, and protuberant eye.

Though Politian, as in some instances may have been already observed, often indulges without scruple the sportive suggestions of his own youthful fancy, yet he frequently avails himself with great felicity, of those appropriate images with which a mind classically imbued like his was stored. He has thus evinced not only a singular familiarity with the poets of antiquity, but also a minute attention to the remains of ancient art.

No poet's pen could have succeeded better in the description of an ancient Intaglio or Bas-relief, than he has done in his Rape of Europa; which was probably intended as a copy of some such classical original.

——— In un formoso, e bianco tauro
Si vede Giove per amor converso
Portarne il dolce suo ricco tesauro,
E lei volgere il viso al lito perso

In atto paventosa: e i be' crin d' auro
Scherzan nei petto per lo vento avverso:
La vesta ondeggia, e indietro fa ritorno;
L' una man tien al dorso, e l' altra al corno. (*b*)

Le ignude piante a se ristrette accoglie,
Quasi temendo il mar, che non le bagne:
Tale atteggiata di paure e doglie
Par chiami in van le sue dolci compagne;
Le quali assise tra fioretti e foglie
Dolenti Europa ciascheduna piagne.
"Europa," sona il lito, "Europa, riedi:"
Il toro nota, e talor bacia i piedi.

Beneath a snow white bull's majestic guise
Here, Jove conceal'd by Love's transforming pow'r,
Exulting bears his peerless, blooming prize:
With wild affright she views the parting shore.
Her golden locks the winds that adverse rise
In loose disorder spread her bosom o'er.
Light floats her vest, by the same gales upborne:
One hand the chine, one grasps the circling horn.

Her naked feet, as of the Waves afraid,
With shrinking effort seem to avoid the main;
Terror and grief in every act,—for aid
Her cries invoke the fair attendant train:
They seated distant on the flow'ry mead,
Frantic recal their mistress lov'd in vain.
"Return Europa," far resounds the cry:
On sails the God, intent on amorous joy.

(*b*) — Pavet hæc: litusque ablata relictum
Respicit: et dextrâ cornu tenet: altera dorso
Imposita est: tremulæ sinuantur flamine vestes.
Ovid. Metamorph. Lib. ii.

Such felicity of description indeed has our juvenile poet displayed, not merely in the passages already adduced, but also in many others wherein the amours of the Gods are concerned, and the triumphs of Love exhibited, that selection seems to be injustice where all are equally deserving of praise. His Pluto and Proserpine is a picture not overcharged with figures, and yields to none of the rest, either in the happiness of its design, or the excellence of its execution.

Quasi in un tratto vista, amata, e tolta
Dal fiero Pluto Proserpina pare
Sopra un gran carro, e la sua chioma sciolta
A' Zefiri amorosi ventilare.
La bianca vesta in un bel grembo accolta
Sembra i colti fioretti giù versare:
Si percuote ella il petto, e in vista piagne,
Or la madre chiamando, or le compagne. (c)

Seen, lov'd, embrac'd by Hell's relentless pow'r
Here, sudden, Proserpine is borne away
On car sublime; while hovering amorous o'er,
Amidst her streaming hair the Zephyrs play.
Fallen from her folded vest of white, before,
The scatter'd flow'rs their blooming tints display.
She beats her breast; and with distrest acclaim
Now calls her nymphs, and now her mother's name.

(c) Pœnè simul visa est, dilectaque, raptaque Diti:
Usque adeo properatur amor. Dea territa mæsto,
Et matrem et comites, sed matrem sæpiùs, ore
Clamat.

Ovid. Metam. Lib. v. Fab. 6.

Politian's most whimsical representations are those of the procession of Bacchus, introduced in the story of Ariadne, and his Polipheme and Galatea. These were subjects not a little tempting to a juvenile imagination; and no wonder if Politian was in some measure carried away by them into the regions of extravagance. To avoid prolixity, we shall content ourselves with adducing the former; the general design of which, bespeaks not less than that of any of the others, its classical origin and character.

Dall' altra parte la bella Arianna
Con le sorde acque di Teseo si dole,
E dell' aura, e del sonno, che la inganna;
Di paura tremando, come sole
Per picciol' ventolin palustre canna:
Par che in atto abbia impresse tai parole:
Ogni fiera di te meno è crudele:
Ognun di te più mi saria fedele. (*d*)

Vien sopra un carro d' ellera e di pampino
Coperto Bacco, il qual duo tigri guidano,
E con lui par che l' alta rena stampino
Satiri e Bacche; e con voci alte gridano.
Quel si vede ondeggiar: quei par ch' inciampino;
Quel con un cembal bee: quei par che ridano:
Qual fa d' un corno, e qual delle man ciotola:
Qual ha preso una Ninfa, e qual si rotola.

Sopra l' asin Silen, di ber sempre avido
Con vene grosse, nere, e di mosto umide,
Marcido sembra, sonnacchioso, e gravido;
Le luci ha di vin rosse, enfiate, e fumide:

(*d*) Mitius inveni quam te genus omne ferarum.
Ovid. Heroid. Ep. 10.

L' ardite Ninfe l' asinel suo pavido
Pungon col tirso; ed ei con le man tumide
A' crin s' appiglia; e mentre sì l' attizzano
Casca nel collo, e i Satiri lo rizzano.

HERE, to the deep, regardless of her woes,
Thee Theseus! Ariadne seems to blame,
The treacherous gales, and her ill starr'd repose:
Meantime such tremors agitate her frame
As when o'er reedy marshes zephyr blows.
She speaks; or fancy hears her thus exclaim:
Than thee, each monster of these wilds I find
Perfidious man! less brutal, less unkind.

By tigers drawn, his car with vine-leaves crown'd
And elder, Bacchus comes! his wonted band
Satyrs and Bacchants wild the God surround,
And with irregular footsteps print the strand.
They reel; their cries and saucy jeers resound:
This from his cymbal quaffs; this from his hand
Or vocal horn, the purple liquor drains:
That in his rude embrace a Nymph detains.

Bestrides his ass, still with the draught uncloy'd
Silenus, bloated he, obscene to view,
With purple dregs his stupid forehead dy'd;
His dull, dim eye betrays a sanguine hue.
Shrinks his chaf'd steed, while flippant Nymphs his side
Goad with the thyrsus, and deriding shew
The half dismounted Sire: he grasps the mane
Hirsute, and friendlier hands his weight sustain.

Towards the conclusion of the poem, the author is led by circumstances connected with his subject, to moralize on the instability of

all sublunary bliss. He remarks the folly of dwelling with fruitless lamentations, upon the remembrance of those accidents that are in their own nature incapable of remedy: and hence an appropriate occasion is furnished, for the introduction of some of the most lofty and dignified sentiments that distinguished the School of Zeno.

Having been speaking of Fortune, he says:

O FELICE colui, che lei non cura
E che a' suoi gravi assalti non s' arrende!
Ma, come scoglio che incontro al mar dura,
O torre, che da Borea si difende,
Suoi colpi aspetta con fronte sicura,
E sta sempre provvisto a sue vicende:
Da se sol pende; in se stesso si fida;
Nè guidata è dal caso, anzi lui guida.

O HAPPY He who Fortune's frown perceives
Undaunted, and her fiercest shock sustains
Firm as a rock resists the assailing waves,
Or tow'r the tempest's idle rage disdains:
With brow serene her each assault he braves
Prepar'd, nor ever of reverse complains:
Still self collected, in himself confides,
Nor by chance govern'd, even o'er chance presides.

Quitting (though with reluctance) the further consideration of this beautiful poem, we may be allowed to observe that Politian is, not without reason, considered by the learned of his country, among the first and principal restorers of Tuscan Poesy. (*e*)

(*e*) "Se non il primo almeno tra primi," says Crescimbeni. Varchi *(nell'Ercolano)* apertamente dice che "Lo-

The judgment which Giovan-Francesco Pico passes on the vernacular compositions of this extraordinary man, can scarcely be deemed extravagant, when in point of elegance, poetic spirit and descriptive colouring, he holds them equal to the productions of Petrarch and Dante. (*f*) In a word, the Stanze of Politian have been recognised as a model, both with respect to purity of diction and harmony of numbers, by succeeding writers of the greatest celebrity among his countrymen; and from them Tasso himself is confessed to have borrowed many of the beauties of his imagery and style.

Some of Politian's poetical effusions of a date yet more early than his "Stanze," afford grounds for conjecture that at the period when they were composed, he was neither in possession of the substantial rewards of literary merit, nor encouraged to look up to any definite patron in full confidence of obtaining them. It is from his Epigrams, many of which will hereafter be recalled to public notice, that this inference is to be drawn. One of these addressed "ad Fontium" and marked

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renzo de' Medici il Benivieni e il Poliziano, furono i primi i quali cominciassero nel comporre a ritirarsi e discostarsi dal volgo." *(Lo stesso.)*

(*f*) "Rythmis præterea Hetruscis Franciscum Petrarcam et Dantem elegantiâ et vi poeticâ, nec scripturâ tantùm sed picturâ earum rerum quas exprimit facile æquavit." *Joan. Fran. Pici Epistolar: Lib.* iii. *Operum, Vol.* ii. p. 858. "Chiunque le Stanze per la Giostra, &c. legge vede indubitatamente in esse il prototipo di Torquato Tasso che ne ha esaurite le bellezze delle imagini e dello stile." *Editors of "Poesie del Magnifico Lorenzo de' Medici e di suoi Amici, &c.* 4to. In Londra, 1801. Preface, p. vij.

as the performance of his thirteenth year, seems to imply that his ardour for the wreath of poetic excellence was in danger of being utterly extinguished by the dread of that poverty which in every age has been its too frequent concomitant.

Dulce mihi quondam studium fuit; invida sed me
Paupertas laceros terruit uncta sinus.
Nunc igitur quoniam vates sit fabula vulgi,
Esse reor satiùs cedere temporibus.

Dear was the Muse; but hateful to my sight
Chill Penury frowns in greasy, tatter'd plight.
Now, since a bard's the jest of every tongue,
I hold it best to quit the scenes of song.

Some of his verses addressed "Ad Xystum Cardinalem" speak a language no less unequivocal. The final issue of our young poet's call upon this Cardinal's liberality may be probably inferred from another of these *lusus ingenii*, which equally bespeaks his felicity in the turn of an epigram, and the ill success of his suit. (*g*) But if he really experienced the pecuniary difficulties of which he seems to complain, they were no doubt of a very temporary continuance, and soon dissipated by the liberality of his patron, and the happy effects of his own increasing celebrity.

(*g*) Verba dedi Xysto, decet hæc dare dona poetam,
Æra decet Xystum reddere, verba refert.
Verum habet ille alios, qui dent sibi verba, fatemur,
Æra tamen qui nunc det mihi, nullus adest.

Before we proceed to take a view of Politian in his public character, and to notice those works to which his professional duties may be supposed to have given rise, it may not be improper to add a few transient remarks upon some others of his Italian poems which have had the good fortune to survive to our times. His "Orfeo, Tragedia," is generally allowed to be the earliest effort towards a regular dramatic composition known to exist in the Italian Language. It is supposed to have been written so early as the year 1472, at which time the author could have barely compleated the eighteenth year of his age. Politian composed the "Orfeo" at Mantua, in the short space of two days; and amidst the tumultuous festivities of a court; for the entertainment of the Cardinal Francesco Gonzaga and his train, before whom it was there represented. (*h*) At this exhibition there is some authority for supposing that Giovanni Pico of Mirandola and his brother Galeotto were present, but at such a period it is manifest these princes must have been very young. This production contains some elegant specimens "del Toscano Ditirambo" a species of poem derived from the Greeks, in which a bold licence is

(*h*) "La Fabula di Orfeo, la quale a requisizione del "nostro Reverendissimo Cardinale Mantuano in tempo di "duo giorni intra continui tumulti, in stilo vulgare, perchè "dagli spettatori fusse meglio intesa, avevo composta, &c." *Ang. Poliziano a Messer Carlo Canale.* This notice is furnished by Il Padre Ireneo Affò on the authority of the Abbate Bettinelli. The latter derived it from the *Storia MS. di Mantova dell' Amadei.* See the preface of Ireneo Affò to his edition of the "Orfeo," 4*to. Venez.* 1776, for this, and many other particulars relating to this Drama.

admitted with regard to words and figures and all kinds of measures are promiscuously intermixed. (*i*) The first introduction of this kind of verse, which it is supposed was alike unknown before to the Italians and Latins, is attributed to Politian; though the credit of it has been erroneously ascribed to poets of later times.

Politian's Canzone, entitled "Le Memorie Deliziose," has been pronounced superior to many, and inferior scarcely to any of those of Petrarch. (*k*) A variety also of the most elegant "Canzone a ballo" are thought to be the offspring of Politian's pen. The few specimens, in short, of his talents in the composition of Tuscan poesy which are still extant, cannot fail to excite in the breast of their reader a sincere regret for the loss of those that have perished.

(*i*) "Il Ditirambo è un componimento mescolato d' "ogni sorta di versi e di metri, e ripieno di stranissime frasi "e locuzioni; e benchè per lo più si faccia in lode di Bac- "co nondimeno non è vietato trattare in esso anche altre "materie capaci d' esser maneggiate con estro gagliardissimo "e con ismoderata licenza. Egli per quanto noi stimiamo, "non prima del tempo d' Angelo Poliziano capitò dalla "Grecia (non sappiamo che fusse in uso appo i Latini) nella "Toscana come abbiam detto nella nostra Istoria, &c." *Crescimbeni Commentarii all' Istoria della Poesia Italiana. The edition of Mr. Mathias, Vol.* ii. *p.* 78, 8vo. *in Londra,* 1803.

(*k*) This poem, the beauties of which it would not perhaps be easy to transfuse into the English language, the lover of Italian Literature may find amongst the "Compo- "nimenti Lirici de' piu illustri Poeti d' Italia *scelti da T. J.* "*Mathias in trei volumi,* 8vo. *in Londra della Stamperia di* "*Bulmer,* 1802:" a selection which does honour to the critical discrimination of the learned Editor, and is recommended by the exquisite beauty of the typography.

It has been asserted that many of his Italian poems hitherto inedited are yet preserved in the libraries of Florence and Rome, especially in the *Bibliotheca Chisiana* of the last mentioned city: which, says Crescimbeni, "se "fossero uscite alla publica vista, anche ques- "to secolo nel colmo della barbarie potrebbe "vantarsi d' avere avuto un Lirico di somma "estimazione."

Politian's "Le Montanine" is a poem perhaps less worthy to be distinguished from the rest of those which are given as the undisputed productions of his pen for its comparative excellence than for its brevity. It possesses however, a characteristic simplicity which may possibly recommend it to the approbation of the critical reader.

LE MONTANINE.

SESTINA IRREGOLARE.

VAGHE le Montanine, e Pastorelle
Donde venite si leggiadre e belle?

Vegnam da l' alpe presso ad un boschetto;
Piccola capannella e il nostro sito;
Col padre e con la madre in picciol letto,
Dove natura ci ha sempre nudrito.
Torniam la sera dal prato fiorito,
Chè abbiam pasciute nostre pecorelle.

Qual è 'l paese dove nate siete,
Che si bel frutto sovra ogni altro luce?

Creature d' Amor voi mi parete,
Tanta è la vostra faccia che riluce.
Nè oro, nè argento in voi non luce,
E mal vestíte, e parete angiolelle.

Ben si posson doler vostre bellezze
Poi che fra valli e monti le mostrate;
Chè non è terra di si grandi altezze
Che voi non foste, degne ed onorate:
Ora mi dite, se vi contentate
Di star nell' alpe cosi poverelle.

Più è contenta ciascuna di noi
Gire alla mandria drieto alla pastura,
Più che non fate ciascuna di voi
Gire a danzare dentro a vostre mura.
Ricchezza non cerchiam, nè più ventura,
Se non be' fiori, e facciam grillandelle.

Maids of these hills, so fair and gay,
Say whence you come, and whither stray?

From yonder heights: our lowly shed
Those clumps that rise so green disclose;
There by our simple parents bred,
We share their blessing and repose,
Now evening from the flowery close
Recals where late our flocks we fed.

Ah! tell me in what region grew
Such fruits transcending all compare!
Methinks I Love's own offspring view,
Such graces deck your shape and air;
Nor gold nor silver glitter there:
Mean your attire, yet angels you.

Yet well such beauties might repine
Mid desart hills and vales to bloom!
What scenes where pride and splendor shine,
Would not your brighter charms become!
But say—with this your Alpine home
Can ye content, such bliss resign?

Far happier we, our fleecy care
Trip lightly after to the mead!
Than pent in city walls, your fair
Foot the gay dance in silks array'd:
Nor wish have we, save who shall braid
With gayest wreaths her flowing hair.

Politian having been appointed preceptor to the children of Lorenzo de' Medici, a domestic incident of no extraordinary kind gave rise to that epistolary address to his patron which occurs amongst his prose works under the title "De Irâ." It may perhaps be thought that his pen, was, on this occasion, guided rather by partiality and prejudice than sound reasoning. Certain it is that the scholar, whose early promise he was willing to regard in so auspicious a light, did not eventually justify his preceptor's fond expectations. Yet does this epistle contain a variety of remarks which commend themselves to the notice of those who are employed in the work of education, and entitle the author to the praise of having seriously reflected on the nature of that important office in which he found himself engaged.

"The Poet Accius," says Politian, "be-

ing in his juvenile days on a certain time at Tarentum, paid a visit of civility to Pacuvius, who was then far advanced in age, and confined by a lingering infirmity. At the request of the latter, Accius read to him his tragedy, intitled "Atreus." Pacuvius is said to have praised the lofty tone of his numbers, and the poetic fire with which they were animated, but thought them rather harsh and crude. In this judgment Accius acquiesced, but declared it did not discourage him; for that he despaired not of writing better at some future time. Genius, he added, partaking of the imperfections of fruit in a state of immaturity, like it, acquires due mellowness and flavour from time alone: or if it attain an unnatural precocity, must at as early a period wither and decay. But what, you will say, is to be inferred from this narration.—The human mind, Lorenzo! has other symptoms, at first appearance equally unpromising, which the wise may yet consider as pledges of future excellence. Such possibly might be that storm of passion lately excited in your little son, my pupil; of which, as it arose from reproof and disgrace I cannot disapprove. You require some reasons for my opinion. Expect not then an unqualified eulogy on anger; though philosophers tell us nature has not implanted in us this passion in vain: that it is not only an incentive to fortitude, but constitutes a part of that virtue: or if it be a vice, is to be deemed one of the least; as deviating least from the course of reason; agreeably to Aristotle's definition. It is a just observation of Horace,

'Vitiis nemo sine nascitur; optimus ille est
'Qui minimis urgetur.'

"Why then should anger in a child altogether shock or offend us; in whom, assuredly, the contrary quality, or what the Greeks term ἀοργησια, is to be deprecated no less than sluggishness in a young steed: for such a temperament cannot be the result of reason at so tender an age; and must consequently proceed from natural dulness and imbecility. Heat is deemed by naturalists much more agreeable to nature than cold: a fact of which, among many other things, the seasons are an argument; for no sooner,

'Solvitur acris hyems gratâ vice veris et Favonî;'

than the transcendent beauties of nature presently revive. The woods are clothed with leaves; the fields adorned with every species of flowers and verdure, which recreate us with the most agreeable odours. The air, now cloudless and serene, is filled with the soothing harmony of singing birds: the rivulets murmur in their pebbly channels: every thing smiles upon the sight, every thing charms the ear; meadows, fields, woods, vallies, animals wild and tame, the heaven itself, and if I may so speak, universal nature seems to invite our inward perceptions and external senses to enjoy the admirable spectacle it displays before us. All is gaiety and exultation. Summer succeeds; which, abounding more in heat, teems with a more copious production of corn and seeds. This season is followed by Autumn,

'Calcatis sordidus uvis,'

who rioting in the abundance of fruitage, bears in his wealthy hand the happy horn of Amalthea. When rudely to extinguish all appears,

'Glacialis hyems canos hirsuta capillos.'

But to return from this excursion; those who approve of total apathy, seem to figure to themselves the existence, not of a human creature, but of a trunk or a stone; which is in fact a non-existence. Should I select as the pupil of my hope and promise, one who would hear my instructions with drowsiness, who must be continually roused, jogged, spurred, scolded and beaten to attention? Let me first mark, Lorenzo! as the poet says:

'Quis cuique dolor victo; quæ gloria palmæ.'

For from such, as in early years are so constituted, as neither to be influenced by praise nor shame, in the opinion of the ancient Lacedemonians, nothing excellent ought to be expected. Give me, says that most judicious of preceptors, Quintilian, a youth who weeps when he is foiled, who exults when victorious. Nor is he averse to a playful disposition, which he considers, like this passion of anger under our consideration, as an argument of a lively and vigorous mind. Hence, according to Plutarch, it became an old adage, 'Iram non habere, qui mentem non habeant.' Yet from the sullen child, none differs more than the irritable: the former, malignant, implacable, revengeful, disingenuous; the lat-

ter hot and fiery, but his resentment is transient; he is placable, forgiving; — such is the emotion which is ever predominant in those whom nature has endued with a noble and liberal mind.

"You had not inflicted stripes upon your son; you had not terrified him by menaces; yet by your reproof you extorted tears. Why weeps my little Piero, — of what does he complain? Of the same thing in his degree as the noble spirited Myrmidons, the fellow soldiers of Achilles, who wept because they could not realize that glory of military prowess, which they imaged in their minds. 'Erubuit' says the comic writer, 'salva res est.' Think you not, Lorenzo! this paroxysm of puerile passion is the same thing with honourable shame? They spring, if rightly considered, from the same motives; they produce the same effects; they are both the attendants and the handmaids of virtue."

With the charge of superintending the education of Lorenzo's children, Politian afterwards combined that of a public professor of the Greek and Latin languages in the Florentine academy; an office conferred upon him, if we may credit some accounts, not merely by the partiality of Lorenzo, but the unanimous suffrages of the citizens of Florence. He was also presented with the freedom of the city, and advanced to the dignity of doctor of the civil law. Hitherto the Greek chair at Florence had been exclusively filled by a native of Greece. Joannes Argyropylus was the first public professor of that language, after the institution of the

Menckenius in vitâ Politiani.

academy. His loss, having on his retirement been for a short interval supplied by Theodore Gaza, the vacant chair was at length more permanently filled by Demetrius Chalcondyles, who commenced his learned labours about the year 1479. Politian has the credit of being the first among the moderns, not of Grecian extraction, who professed the Greek language: and though Chalcondyles long continued to exercise his learned functions at Florence, yet his ultimate retirement to Milan has been attributed to chagrin and jealousy on account of the Latin scholar's superior talents and success. (*l*)

(*l*) Mr. Roscoe *(Life of Lor. de' Med. vol.* ii. *p.* 110, *&c.)* questioning the truth of P. Jovius's story, that enmity subsisted between Politian and Chalcondyles, has justly remarked that there is no evidence in the writings of the former to support the fact. Hody's conclusion is indeed that Chalcondyles in quitting Florence after the death of Lorenzo, was actuated by motives of this personal kind. "Sive æmuli sui insolentiâ pertæsus, sive illius "gloriâ in Latinis præsertim literis obscurari se ægrè ferens, "Mediolanum secessit, a Ludovico Sfortiâ accitus." *(De Græcis illustribus.)*

Mr. Tenhove, it appears not on what authority, asserts that the personal animosities of Chalcondyles and Politian were so violent as to be with difficulty restrained within the bounds of decorum by Lorenzo himself: and records a witticism of the Greek scholar, in allusion perhaps to Politian's personal deformities: "That the ancient owl was an em-"blem of wisdom, whilst the modern one had only its eyes, "its plumage, and its beak." *(See Sir R. Clayton's Memoirs of Tenhove, Vol. I.* p. 333, *&c.)* Menckenius not only asserts that Politian was the open and fortunate rival of Demetrius Chalcondyles, but deduces various inferences from the supposed fact, which, if his hypothesis be false, must fall with it. To this circumstance he ascribes the general hatred which (according to him) all the scholars of Greek extraction manifested against the person and charac-

The celebrity of Politian's name and talents was soon diffused more widely; and such additional lustre did it reflect on the literary institution of Florence, that students of the first distinction began to resort thither from all parts of Europe. An author, who it must however be owned, has more than once been convicted of dealing in extravagancies, does not scruple to assert that more than five hundred young gentlemen of the first quality constituted his auditory, and constantly performed the respectful ceremony of attending him both to and from the public schools. (*m*) However this might be, there is at least indubitable evidence that many of those who in the succeeding age became the most successful vin-

Varillas, Anecdot. de Flor. Lib. iv. p. 195.

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ter of Politian. Hence, says he, his violent dissension with Michael Marullus, who acted the part of an open enemy, while Joannes Lascaris exercised that of a more insidious and secret one; by undervaluing Politian's Greek version of the Epigram "De Hermaphrodito," attributed to an ancient poet of the name of Pulex (a Pulice poetâ vetustiore) and publishing a rival version of his own.

(*m*) For the truth of this story, so honourable to Politian, Menckenius himself dares not vouch; but he thinks it not improbable, since Philippus Beroaldus, a professor of Bologna, whose talents were by no means equal to those of his literary friend and correspondent, Politian, had an auditory consisting of six hundred students. Witness his own words: "Testes sunt Scholastici sexcenti, testis est pulpitum illud "ex quo quotidiè profitemur, me identidem esse præconem "et buccinatorem tuæ singularis eruditionis." *Beroaldi ad Pol. Epist. ap Epist. Pol. Lib.* vi. *ep.* 2. "But be this as it "might," adds Menckenius, "satis tamen ad gloriam vel "iste habuit discipulorum numerum, præsertim cum illos "etiam non rarò in audientium subselliis conspexerit quibus "ipse olim usus fuerat præceptoribus." (*Not. p.* 64, *seqq. ad vitam Pol. Confer etiam Politiani ad Puccium Ep. Lib.* vi. *ep.* 5.

dicators of learning by their public labours or private researches, were in the number of students who profited by his personal instructions. The names of Scipio Carteromachus (*n*) of Pistoja, Joannes Baptista Egnatius, (*o*) Raphael Volaterranus, (*p*) Varinus, or Phavorinus

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(*n*) The literary talents of Scipio Carteromachus, of Pistoja, appear from his "De Laudibus Græcarum Literarum Oratio," *Venet.* 1504, and *Bas. ap. Frob.* excusa; also *Baruthi*, 1690, and prefixed by H. Stephanus to his *Thesaurus Græcæ Linguæ*. A few Greek epigrams of his occur, some of which relate to the works published by Aldus Manutius. He rendered into Latin "Aristidis Smyrnæi de Laudibus Urbis, Rom. Orat." and a Greek epigram of his is prefixed to *Varini Phavorini Camertis Thesaurus seu Cornucopia Ling. Græcæ.* Having laid the foundation of his studies at Rome and Florence, he became professor of the Belles Lettres at Padua, Venice, Ravenna and Rome. *(Vid. Pier. Valerian. de infelicitate Literator. Bayle. Giornali de' Letterati d' Italia, &c.)* Carteromachus in a Greek epigram addressed to Politian, terms him

— νεων ψυχαις φως, ἡελιοσ τε μαθοντων,
Εις μεν Αθηναιη φιλτατος, εἰς δε σοφος.

His Latin verses in praise of his preceptor afford a testimony no less flattering of the high estimation in which his instructions were held by the students at Florence. See them subjoined to his letter to Politian. *Lib.* xii. *ep.* 22.

(*o*) Joannes Baptista Egnatius, of Venice, was a distinguished restorer of letters. He was, according to some accounts, Politian's scholar many years, and was one of those who afterwards came nearest to equal the celebrity of his master. His "de Principibus Romanorum libri," have procured him a place amongst the "Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores." *Vid. Teissier Eloges, &c. et Thuani Histor. Lib.* xii.

(*p*) Raphael Volaterranus (a patriâ sic dictus), holds as a scholar a no less honourable rank than the former. His work, entitled "Commentarii Urbani," Menckenius terms "immensi laboris opus." See Politian's Greek letter addressed to him, *ap. Pol. Epist. Lib.* xii. *ep.* 20.

Camertes, (*q*) Petrus Crinitus, (*r*) and our own illustrious countrymen William Grocyn (*s*) and Thomas Linacer, (*t*) with others, are suf-

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(*q*) Phavorinus, surnamed Camertes from the place of his birth, was, according to Menckenius, elevated by Leo X. to the bishopric of Nocera. He was a favourite scholar of Politian, and much in his confidence. *Vid. Pol. Epist. Varino Thesauro Cornucopiæ, &c. præfixam:* also *Mattaire Annal. tom.* i. *p.* 246, *note a.* A Greek epigram addressed to him by Politian, to be found *inter Epigr. Gr. Politiani*, and also prefixed *Dictionario Græco Phavorini*, is said to have been inscribed on Phavorinus's tomb. *(Vid. Ughellum in Ital. Sacra,* tom. i. p. 1072. *Giornali de' Letterati d' Ital. &c.*

(*r*) Petrus Crinitus is well known as a polished and elegant writer, who successfully imitated the eloquence of his preceptor. He distinguished himself by his books "de Honestâ Disciplinâ," and "de Poetis Latinis." He was, according to Jovius, one of the most eloquent of Politian's scholars; and was chosen to succeed him in the professor's chair at Florence. He testified his veneration for the memory of his master by a Latin epigram, and two letters addressed to Alexander Sartius. *Apud Pol. Ep. Lib.* xii.

(*s*) W. Grocyn, said to have been a native of Bristol, was born in 1442. He received the first rudiments of his education at Oxford. Afterwards visiting Italy he studied two years at Florence under Chalcondyles and Politian. He became on his return professor of Greek and Latin at Oxford. Grocyn maintained a close literary intimacy with Colet, Lilly, and Latimer, (who are also said to have acquired their skill in the learned languages abroad) as well as with Erasmus and other principal scholars of the age. Nothing of his appears to be extant except a Latin epistle addressed to Aldus Manutius on the subject of their young friend Thomas Linacer. Some ascribe this literary barrenness to his over fastidiousness in composition. *Vid. Epp. Erasmi. Wood's Athenæ. Freind Histor. Medicinæ, Operum, p.* 359. *Par.* 1735, 4*to.*

(*t*) Thomas Linacer was born at Dover, A. D. 1460, became a member of All Souls College, Oxford, in 1484. Going abroad he very successfully studied the Greek and Latin languages at Florence under Chalcondyles and Poli-

ficient to immortalize the professional fame

tian; and was treated with peculiar courtesy by Lorenzo de' Medici. He afterwards visited Rome, and formed a friendship with Hermolaus Barbarus. Linacer, as Mattaire believes, was the first Englishman who attempted to translate Greek authors into Latin. He began with Proclus de Sphærâ, which having carefully revised he inscribed on his return home to Arthur, Prince of Wales, son of Henry VII. who became his pupil; and it was published with other similar treatises by Aldus, A. D. 1499. He studied with great attention the works of Aristotle, and it is supposed he and his friends Latimer and Grocyn once cherished a design of forming a complete version of them. Afterwards taking up the profession of medicine, he produced a very elegant Latin translation of Galen "de Sanitate Tuendâ," which he published A. D. 1517, and inscribed to Henry VII. who had appointed him his physician. This was followed by various other versions from the same author. His translation of Galen "de Morbis Curandis Libri XIV." was on its publication recommended by the following epigram from the pen of Janus Lascaris.

Omnigenos Pæan suetum te pellere morbos
In Latio, et Diti subtrahere arte animas,
Desidem ubi et bardum vidit, facunde Galene,
Posthabitumque aliis quos memorare piget;
Dixit prospiciens populis; "Age, mysta Linacre,
Redde virum ingratis quamlibet Ausoniis,
Tam sibi, quam proavis, qui dogmata prisca relinquunt,
Tricisque involvunt ingenia et tenebris."
Hæc Deus. At Thaumas afflatus numine, talem
Te vertit, qualem Græcia culta tulit.

Linacer composed a grammar of the Latin tongue in English for the use of Prince Arthur, his pupil; which was translated into Latin by Buchanan, and printed by R. Steph. 1536. As a philologist however he ranks more highly on account of his "De Emendatâ Latini Sermonis Structurâ Libri vi." first published by R. Pynson, in 1524. He gave a very salutary check to the mischiefs originating from the ignorance and empiricism of unqualified medical practitioners, by projecting and founding under the patronage of the King and Wolsey, the Royal College of Physicians, for which institution he drew up laws and regulations, and over which he first presided. He also founded medical professorships at Oxford and Cambridge. Having in the latter part of his life entered into holy orders, he died at an advanced age, October 21, 1524. *Vide Freind ut supra.*

and talents of Politian, whilst the writings of many of them furnish the most grateful and unequivocal testimonies how much they esteemed and profited by so able an instructor. Politian's ode, addressed "Ad Juventutem," which in vigour and animation is scarcely inferior to the finest of his poetical productions, derives additional interest from the reality of that character which he therein assumes.

JAM cornu gravidus, præcipitem parat
Afflatus subitis frigoribus fugam
Autumnus pater, et deciduas sinu
Frondes excipit arborum.

Cantant emeritis, Bacche, laboribus
Te nunc agricolæ, sed malè sobrios
Ventosæ querulo murmure tibiæ
Saltatu subigunt frui.

Nos anni rediens orbita sub jugum
Musarum revocat, dulce ferentibus,
Porrectisque monent sidera noctibus
Carpamus volucrem diem.

I mecum, docilis turba, biverticis
Parnassi rapidis per juga passibus,
Expers quò senii nos vocat, et rogi,
Consors gloria cœlitum.

Nam me seu comitem, seu, JUVENES! ducem
Malitis, venio: nec labor auferet
Quærentem tetricæ difficili gradu
Virtutis penetralia.

See! bow'd with blushing fruits, a cumbrous load,
Grey Autumn shrinks, while Boreas raves,
Chill'd with the blast; the arid leaves
Deciduous, his impatient lap receives:—
Thee Bacchus! thee, the jolly God

Now grateful rustics sing; their labours o'er;
No sober train; while to the sound
Of stridulous pipe, in aukward round,
Staggering, ill-measur'd footsteps beat the ground
In frantic dance, and wild uproar.

Us,—while the year fast waning, melts away,
The pensive hour again invites
To Poesy's sublime delights:
And deepening shades, and star-illumin'd nights,
Bid us improve the fleeting day.

Together, Friends belov'd! with eager speed,
We'll climb the rude Parnassian steep:
Praise, that defies death's leaden sleep,
And can with Gods immortal vigils keep,
Shall prove the laurell'd poet's meed.

Your leader,—or associate,—lo I come;
Nor shall my unwearied feet betray
Unmanly fear, or cold delay,
Nor ought deter me from the arduous way
That leads to Glory's sacred dome.

That Picus, of Mirandula, when his temporary visits to Florence rendered it practicable, took a pleasure in attending the public lectures of Politian, there is sufficient evidence to prove. But him Politian was careful to recognize by no means in the inferior charac-

ter of a disciple, but rather on the more honourable footing of a literary friend. (*v*)

Of all Politian's Latin poems at present known to be extant, his "SYLVÆ" are the most considerable and elaborate. These, like the greater part of his other compositions, afford ample testimony of their author's learning, which they seem calculated to display, even to ostentation. With whatever imperfections of taste, or occasional deviations from the strictest purity of the Latin style they may be charged, they have very justly and efficaciously contributed to Politian's fame; and entitle him to the praise of the earliest and most successful restorer of Latin poesy, after the age of Petrarch and Dante.

Of these Sylvæ, that entitled "RUSTICUS" was first written. (*w*) The precise time

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(*v*) On some particular occasion of this sort we find him addressing Picus in the following singular and laconic epistle.

ANGELUS POLITIANUS, to his beloved PICUS of MIRANDULA.

Although with the intention of doing me honour, you lately took a seat amongst my auditory, expect not my verbal acknowledgments. If I had the good fortune to please you, the obligation is sufficiently acknowledged; if otherwise, I have little reason to congratulate myself on your attendance. Adieu.

Epist. Lib. xii. *ep.* 3.

(*w*) Politian's "Rusticus" was inscribed to Jacobus Salviatus, probably one of Politian's scholars, and son-in-law of Lorenzo de' Medici. In this composition Menckenius thinks he had an eye to the second book of Hesiod in particular. It was subjoined to an edition of Hesiod, published *Basil.* 1539, *in* 8vo. *ap. Mich. Isingrinum. vid. Mattaire Annal.* tom. iii. *p.* 305. It is also added to *Renati Rapini Hortorum Lib.* iv. *Lugd. Bat.* 1668, 12mo. An early edition of Politian's "Rusticus" was published *Parisiis, ex*

of its composition cannot now perhaps be ascertained; but it certainly in this respect claims precedency of most of those which were the productions of his maturer years. Contrasted with the other "Sylvæ" of Poli-

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Officinâ J. B. Ascensii in folio, sine anno, with the commentaries of Nicol. Beraldus; and again, *Basileæ ap. Froben.* 1518, in 4to. To these editions are prefixed or subjoined several commendatory poems by Quintianus Stoa, Gerardus Vercellanus, and J. Ravisius Textor; in which the annotator comes in for at least an equal share of praise with the poet. One of these, by J. Ravisius Textor, is here cited from Menckenius for the entertainment of the reader.

RUSTICUS. POLITIANUS.

R. Angele dormitas? P. Quis tu? R. Tua Rusticus. P. ohe!
Vix puto. R. Compositas inspice ruris opes.
P. "Ruris opes saturi" quamvis in limine portes
Tu tamen es proprio dissimilis domino.
R. Cur? P. Quoniam gemmæ te circumquàque venustant,
Sed dominum modicæ non nisi ruris opes.
R. Miraris? P. Miror. Sed quid peregrina vagaris?
R. Me profugi quærit solis uterque locus.
P. Cur? R. Sum grata viris; nam commentarius iste
Quo cingor numeris convenit Angelicis.
P. Quis tibi Ruris opes, et agreste poema gerenti,
Regales potuit tradere divitias?
R. Calliopes sponsus, doctæ conviva Minervæ,
Castaliæ potus rore BERALDUS aquæ.
P. Quæ tulit hunc tellus? R. AURELIA. P. Delphica tellus!
Si Phœbi quæris dogmata, Phœbus adest.

The commentator with whom Politian is here made to express himself so well satisfied, was Nicolaus Beraldus nobilissimus Gallorum, ineunte Sec. xvi. Grammaticus! The commentary is preceded by "Beraldi prælectio in Ang. Polit. Rusticum, habita Lutetiæ, in Tricovensi Gymnasio;" in which he speaks thus honourably of Politian and his poem: "Profectò si Politiani ingenium, linguarum peritiam, singu-"larem incredibilemque eloquentiam ac nitorem, et laten-"tem in Sylvæ hujus non modò versibus, sed (pænè dixe-"ram) singulis verbis, reconditam doctrinam non populari

tian, it may however be questioned whether it merits not the palm of excellence; since whilst in correctness and brilliancy of language it is not perhaps inferior to the "Manto" and "Ambra," it surpasses them in originality.

These poems were all composed for academical purposes, and publicly recited by Politian at the commencement of his professional lectures on the works of those ancient authors to which they respectively relate. The "Rusticus," which was introductory to his public lectures on the works of Hesiod and Virgil's Georgics, commences with a summary explanation of its object, and an appropriate invocation of Pan, the god of shepherds, and the patron of a rural life.

Ruris opes saturi, gnavoque agitanda colono
Munera, et omniferæ sacrum telluris honorem,
Ludere septenâ gestit mea fistula cannâ:
Fistula, Mantoæ quam nuper margine ripæ
Ipse renidenti dum dat mihi Tityrus ore,
Hâc, puer, Ascræum repete, inquit, arundine carmen.
Pan ades! and curvi mecum sub fornice saxi
Versibus indulge, medio dum Phœbus in axe est,
Dum gemit ereptâ viduatus compare turtur,
Dum sua torquati recinunt dictata palumbes.
Hìc resonat blando tibi pinus amata susurro:
Hìc vaga coniferis insibilat aura cupressis:
Hìc scatebris salit, et bullantibus incita venis

"trutinâ expendemus, examinabimusque, dignus videbitur "qui multis veterum non conferatur modò, sed etiam præ-"feratur." Beraldus promised commentaries on the "Manto," and "Ambra," but Menckenius knows not whether they ever appeared. *Vid. Mencken. in vitâ Pol.*

Pura coloratos interstrepit unda lapillos:
Hìc tua vicinis ludit lasciva sub umbris
Jamdudum nostri captatrix carminis Echo.

THE COUNTRY'S stores I sing, the rustic's toil,
And sacred honours of the all-fruitful soil.
This pipe of Mantuan reeds, this vocal frame
Which Tityrus gave, demands the appropriate theme.
Take this (as erst on Mincio's banks I stray)
He smiling said, and wake the Ascræan lay.
Thou PAN! embower'd by this rude arche's shade
From Sol's high noon, my labours deign to aid;
Reft of his mate, what time the turtle mourns,
And ring-doves chaunt their amorous call by turns.
Here thy lov'd pine its soothing whisper lends;
Here to each breeze the berried cypress bends;
Pellucid here, from bubbling springs supplied,
O'er colour'd pebbles ripples hoarse the tide;
Whilst thy own Echo, hark! with wanton tongue,
From yonder grove already mocks my song,

Proceeding to expatiate in general on the unambitious and tranquil tenour of a rural life, contrasted with the intrigues, jealousies, and distractions incident to more popular scenes; and on that health, enjoyment and hardy vigour, which the labours and recreations of the rustic equally tend to procure; he afterwards enters into a more particular detail of all those objects and occupations which are peculiar to the country; beginning with the commencement of winter.

Protinus extremo cum jam Boreas autumno
Incubuit terris, primo cum frigore tactæ
Labuntur frondes, maternaque brachia linquunt,
Nec cariem cæsæ formidant robora silvæ:
Ecce sagax tacitam venientis rusticus anni
Curam corde coquit, quâ bubus ab arbore plaustrum
Dedolet, unde juga et curvum fabricetur aratrum.
Nec mora, quin veteris truncata cacumina fagi,
Chaoniæque cadant quercus, nudataque ramos
Ulmus, et audaci laurus sonet icta securi;
Quarum quæque novam fumo explorata calenti
Vertitur in faciem, diversaque munia tractant.

When Boreas, scarce the autumnal season past,
Scowls o'er the scene, first nipt by winter's blast
When falling leaves desert the parent spray,
And sapless fell'd, the timber braves decay,
With anxious foresight, lo! the clown severe
Ponders the labours of the approaching year:
The firm-built wain what grove may best bestow,
Whence he the shaft may form or curving plow.
Redoubled strokes the beechen honours rend,
Chaonian oaks with pond'rous fall descend,
Thy sever'd limbs, proud elm, bestrew the ground,
And laurels with the audacious stroke resound,
Each season'd by his chimney's reeking fumes
Its plastic form, and varied use assumes.

Thus provided with the necessary implements of husbandry, Politian conducts his experienced rustic through the hardy toils of ploughing, and depositing in the fertile earth the seeds of future harvests. Still as days and months revolve they bring with them their appropriate labours; while the poet is careful

to characterize the lapse of time and the progress of the year by no incidents but such as are beautifully apposite, and often bespeak a novelty which does great honour to his own genius, observation, and inventive powers. Thus the season for sowing certain seeds, and performing other labours, is described to be when the Mulberry unfolds its leaves :

Morus
Ante quidem sapiens, nunc ambitiosa, nec ullum
Quæ pariat pomum, sed serica pensa ministret.

The Mulberry once discreet; her pride alone
A mother's duty; late ambitious grown,
No blushing progeny partake her smiles,
Devoted to the silk-worm's gaudy toils.

The delightful and ever varying beauties of rural scenery, the inexhaustible fertility of teeming nature, her manifold productions, animal and vegetable, and the rustic's simple but exhilarating festivities and pleasures, afterwards give occasion to a variety of animated and glowing descriptions in this poem. Politian, however, as if solicitous to leave nothing of this kind unnoticed, resembles a painter, who crowds his canvas with an almost infinite multiplicity of figures; and hence the whole assumes an air of indistinctness and confusion. Yet among this profusion of minuter beauties, his description of the horse, and we may add of that martial bird,

" Quæ vigili lucem vocat ore morantem,"

are particularly spirited: nor are those lines less happily picturesque wherein he paints the riotous frolics of the vintage:

" Ecce autem dulces labris pater ingerit uvas
Autumnus, crebræque elisus verbere plantæ
It per præla latex, puerique examine denso
Exultant, lasciva cohors, circumque, supràque.
Ille manu pandâ pronus bibit, alter ab ipso
Sugit musta lacu crepitantibus hausta labellis.
Hic sua suspensum resupinus in ora racemum
Exprimit, hic socii patulos irrorat hiatus,
Irriguumque mero sordet mentumque, sinusque;
Ebriaque incertis titubant vestigia plantis."

Now father Autumn heaps the wine-vat high;
Drench'd in rich juice the feet incessant ply;
The press o'erflows; with wanton mirth and song
Above, around, the stripling gazers throng.
Prone from his open palm one eager sips;
This drains the racy vat with smacking lips;
This o'er his upward face the bunch suspends
Compressing; gaping this the boon attends,
While purple dregs his chin and vest defile,
And staggering feet the inebriate throng beguile.

In fine, the occupations, pleasures, independence and repose of a rural life are pleasingly delineated in this poem, with all those interesting circumstances that are most properly adapted to add colouring and beauty to the picture. In the conclusion Politian's rustic assumes a dignity perhaps unexpected, yet not incompatible with his station.

Ille autem et volucri petit ardua sidera mente;
Scrutaturque sagax, quæ sit sententia divûm :
Quid quæque emergens, latitansve, oriensve, cadensve
Stella paret, quid quadruplici celer afferat annus
Cardine, quæ sulcis, quæ sint stata tempora messi,
Quidque pecus vehat Olenium, quâ grandine colles
Trux Nepa dilapidet, quo turbine surgat Orion,
Quos glomerent imbres, aut pressus Arione Delphin,
Aut Pleas, Arcturusque senex, Hyadesque puellæ,
Unde bibant herbæ divini pocula lactis,
Cur rubigo satis, uredoque vitibus obsit,
Quid nebulas abigat, tempestatesque repellat.

To ÆTHER now contemplative, he soars
On reasoning wing, and heaven's high will explores;
Stars rising, setting, in the circling sphere
Latent or seen, and all the changeful year
Quadruple scans; what time each crop befriends;
What Caper bodes; what Scorpio fell portends
Of stormy ruin; what Orion's rise;
When Hyads moist or Pleiads rule the skies,
The Bear, or tuneful Fish, what show'rs attend;
To herbs what pow'rs their milky juices lend;
Whence lurid blights the grain or vines deform,
Whence clouds disperse; and what repels the storm.

It must be owned, however, that pursuing this thought, as Politian continues to do, to a degree of unreasonable prolixity, he has very much weakened its beauty and effect. The poet concludes by informing us that this production was the fruit of his learned retirement at FIESOLE, and hence a proper occasion is presented of acknowledging his obligations to Lorenzo, the munificent author of

his dignified leisure, and whatever rendered it more grateful and propitious.

The plan of Politian's "MANTO," which was designed as an introduction to his "Enarrationes in Virgilii Opera," is very properly more artificial than that of the "Rusticus." Manto, as the poets pretend was daughter of Tiresias of Thebes, and like her father endued with the spirit of prophecy. After various adventures, having taken refuge in Italy, she married King Tiberinus, or as some say, the river god of that name, by whom she had a son denominated Ocnus; who founded in the vicinity of his paternal stream the city which afterwards gave birth to Virgil, and called it Mantua, in honour of his mother. (*x*) The poem turns upon the incident of Virgil's birth, at which whilst all the muses are assisting, Manto is also described as present. She, actuated by a sudden impulse of the prophetic spirit peculiar to her character, expatiates on the future fame of the new-born poet, and prospectively enumerates the various subjects which shall be immortalized by his muse. The "Manto" therefore is little more than a rapid and spirited summary of Virgil's several productions; but for its ornaments and diction Politian is as little indebted to his origi-

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(*x*) Venit et Helysio venturi præscia Manto,
Manto, quæ juvenem fluvio conceperat Ocnum,
Ocnum, qui matris dederat tibi Mantua nomen.
Politiani Manto.

Thus Virgil, Æneid 10.

Ille etiam patriis agmen ciet Ocnus ab oris,
Fatidicæ Mantûs et Tusci filius amnis,
Qui muros, matrisque dedit tibi Mantua! nomen.

nal, as it is possible he should be under the like circumstances. Of this poem posterity has certainly entertained a more favourable opinion than its author, who terms it a crude and unpolished performance, composed merely for a particular solemnity, and calculated, like those insects which are termed ephemeral, only for a single day's existence. (*y*) It was first published A. D. 1482, and is distinguished from the other academical poems of Politian which bear the common title of "Sylvæ," by the following beautiful introductory stanzas which the reader will not probably be displeased to find here cited.

ANGELI POLITIANI

SILVÆ CUI TITULUS MANTO

Prefatio.

Stabat adhuc rudibus Pagaseo in littore remis,
Quæ ratis undosum prima cucurrit iter:
Dum tamen extremis hærent succincta ceruchis
Lintea, dum nautas flamina nulla vocant,
Conveniunt Minyæ gemini Chironis ad antrum,
Quà fugit obliquo garrula lympha pede.
Quàque ingens platanus genialibus excubat umbris,
Explicat hìc faciles rustica mensa dapes.

(*y*) "Cogis tu quidem me Laurenti carmen edere inconditum, inemendatum, et quod in publico semel pronuntiatum nimis fuisse impudens visum sit. Satis profectò fuerat vixisse unam diem, quod tam foret imperfectum animal, ac posse etiam inter insecta illa quæ vocentur *Ephemera* connumerari. Namque ego id ad præsentem duntaxat celebritatem quasi Adonidos hortum concinnaveram, &c." *Ang. Pol. Laurent. Medici, Petri Francisci Filio.*

Crescit fronde torus, vernant in flore capilli,
Sed viret Herculeis populus alba comis.
Dat puer Æacides niveâ carchesia dextrâ,
Sed suus Alcidæ pocula miscet Hylas.
Finis erat dapibus : citharam pius excitat Orpheus,
Et movet ad doctas verba canora manus.
Conticuêre viri ; tenuêre silentia venti ;
Vosque retrò cursum mox tenuistis aquæ.
Jam volucres fessis pendere sub æthera pinnis,
Jamque truces videas ora tenere feras.
Decurrunt scopulis auritæ ad carmina quercus,
Nudaque Peliacus culmina motat apex.
Et jam materno permulserat omnia cantu,
Cum tacuit ; querulam deposuitque fidem.
Occupat hanc audax, digitosque affringit Achilles,
Indoctumque rudi personat ore puer.
Materiam quæris ? laudabat carmina blandi
Hospitis, et tantæ murmura magna lyræ.
Riserunt Minyæ : sed enim tibi dicitur, Orpheu !
Hæc pueri pietas grata fuisse nimis.
Me quoque nunc magni nomen celebrare Maronis,
(Si qua fides vero est) gaudet et ipse Maro.

Not yet had left the Pagasæan strand
That bark, whose rude oar first repell'd the deep,
Her flagging sails no breezes yet expand,
But lull'd with specious calms the tardy billows sleep.

Impatient now to tempt the pathless main,
And stem with daring prow the dubious waves,
In Chiron's bow'r conven'd, the heroic train
Where flits a hoarse cascade, the two-form'd chief receives.

Beneath a branching plane-tree's shade reclin'd,
Where the green turf luxuriant herbage spread,

The warriors sate ; their brows with flowers entwin'd ;
But poplar's lighter green adorn'd Alcides' head.

Now, round the board, to crown the chearful feast,
Achilles' youthful hand the goblet bears
Obsequious,—while to allure the Herculean taste
Hylas, his well-belov'd, the nectar'd draught prepares.

The banquet ceas'd ; when Orpheus wakes the lyre,
And tunes to rapturous notes his sacred song,
Whose magic strains each hero's bosom fire,
And move to transport all the scarcely breathing throng.

Hush'd are the winds, entranc'd with strange delight,
The listening rivers stay their rapid floods ;
On quivering wing each bird suspends his flight,
Nor feel their wonted rage the tyrants of the woods.

Even from the mountain steep the oak descends
In measur'd cadence to the harmonious lays ;
While Pelion's hoary summit nodding bends,
And all his trembling bulk ecstatic joy betrays.

Thus as the parent Muse his song inspires,
All nature wondering owns the rapturous theme ;
And now he ceas'd to strike the golden wires,
And now had laid aside the sweetly tuneful frame.

With youthful ardour, but unequal hand,
Achilles tries in turn the warbling strings ;
But its bold sweep unable to command,
Beneath his feeble touch, the tinkling fabric rings.

To fainter numbers scarce distinctly heard,
Ask you what themes the youthful minstrel fire ;

He sings the triumphs of the unrivall'd bard
Who sweeps with mightier powers the deeply sounding lyre.

To arduous themes, while thus in feeble lays
The youth aspires,—the assembled heroes smil'd;
But ORPHEUS not disdain'd his weak essays,
As with complacent eye he view'd the graceful child.

So while to MARO's praise I tune the strain,
To great attempts my feeble numbers move:
Yet, though to reach his flights my efforts vain,
MARO shall hear the song, nor hearing disapprove.

The "AMBRA," which was preparatory to Politian's academical lectures on the works of Homer, is still more complex in its design than either of the preceding. After an introduction declaratory of the object of the poem, Jupiter, attended by all the subordinate deities, is represented as paying a festal visit to his favourite regions of Ethiopia. On this occasion the general gaiety and pleasure of the august assemblage finds no allay, except in the grief of Thetis; who continues inconsolable for the loss of her son. Jupiter at length succeeds in restoring her to cheerfulness, principally by assuring her that a bard shall soon arise, who is destined to perpetuate the name and actions of Achilles to remotest ages. Homer is born. The prodigies attendant on his birth, his education and early love of song are poetically described. As he grows to maturer years, his sensibilities are particularly interested by the exploits of heroes. Eager to sing the actions of Achilles, an irresistible curiosity impels him to call from the tomb the mighty

shade of that warrior by magical incantations. Achilles appears, clad in all the dreadful splendour of his celestial armour; but the bard, gazing with peculiar intenseness on his shield, and unable to endure its radiance, is stricken with blindness. To console him for this misfortune, Achilles presents him with the staff of Tiresias, which inspires him with the oracular enthusiasm necessary for his arduous undertaking. An animated outline follows of those immortal productions, the Iliad, and Odyssey, but more particularly of the former. Politian afterwards expatiates in very fervid and glowing language on Homer's varied and superlative excellencies, and recommends him to his youthful auditory as a finished model in every species of poetical composition. The apotheosis of the Grecian bard follows; and the poem concludes with a brief, but pleasing description of Lorenzo's beautiful villa where it was composed, and whence it derives its name. (*z*) The epistle dedicatory prefixed, proves the "Ambra" to have been finished about the close of the year 1485.

The Sylva, entitled "NUTRICIA," is of all Politian's poetical works the most elaborate. This probably was the poem sent by him to Matthias, king of Hungary, as a specimen of his talents. He terms it "Poema multâ limâ cruciatum, quod laudes poeticæ, quod histo-

(*z*) The "Ambra" was inscribed by Politian to Laurentius Tornabonus, another of his pupils, and a relation of the Medicean family. Mr. Roscoe has embellished his "Life of Lorenzo de' Medici," with a masterly translation of the concluding part of this poem, descriptive of Lorenzo's Villa Cajana. *Vide* Vol. ii. *p.* 138, 4to. *Edit.*

riam continet omnium ferè vatum:" (*a*) and promises a diffuse commentary upon it, which will manifest the extensive and various reading required in order to its composition, and shew the pains and study it cost him; "Quare," he proceeds, "ne quæso numeret Angeli Politiani carmina lector, sed ponderet." (*b*)

Politiani Ep. Lib. ix. Ep. 1.

(*a*) Ascensius, it appears from his notes on this letter, cannot persuade himself that the "Nutricia" was the poem sent by Politian to the king of Hungary. "Quod autem poemation," says he, "huic regi dicet, quia non nominat, in dubio est: ego autem conjecturâ quàdam ducor ut Manto opiner esse: nam reliqua aliis præscripta sunt; neque credam voluisse UNA FIDELIA DUOS DEALBARE PARIETES." But notwithstanding Ascensius's application of the proverb, there is little doubt that he was mistaken in his conjecture. Not to remark that the word *dicet* is here wrongly applied; it is least probable that Politian would select the "Manto" for this purpose, because he speaks of it himself in terms of the least approbation. Of all the poems of Politian that remain, the "Nutricia" best answers to the description here given.

(*b*) Absolutum est hoc carmen in Fæsulano, viii. Idus Octobris, 1486. *(Vid. Carmen ipsum.)* Those commentaries, says Menckenius, which Politian promised, but did not produce, were afterwards supplied by a noble German, viz. Joan. Ludov. Brassicanus, Jureconsultus egregius Tubingensis, in an edition of the "Nutricia," printed Norimbergæ, anno 1538, in 4to. This edition has, *in Fronte*, the following epigram:

Rosini Cujusdam ad Brassicanum.

Aonio Musæ puerum te fonte rigârunt,
Hinc tibi Pierii nectaris haustus erat.
Cynthius æternâ meritò tua tempora lauro
Induit, et clari nominis auxit ope.
Ergo pro meritis gratis Nutritia reddis,
Hinc celebris per te sacra poesis erit.
Tu Musas igitur, Musæ celebrare vicissim
Te satagent, sic par extat utrinque Charis.

Besides Brassicanus, Franciscus Sanchez, a professor in the university of Salamanca, if credit may be attached to the catalogue of Draudius, also composed learned annotations on the "Nutricia," and other Sylvæ of Politian. *Vid. Mencken.*

The same pious duty which incited Æneas to perpetuate the memory of his nurse Cajeta, by giving her name to an Italian port; which gave rise to the Roman festivals termed "Lupercalia;" which prompted Bacchus to exalt his "Nymphæ Dodonides;" Jupiter his "Amalthæa Nutrix," to their stations among the stars, avowedly moves Politian by this tuneful tribute to eternize the praise of Poesy, (*c*) whom he holds endeared to himself by a like relation.

To comprehend in a brief analysis any adequate idea of this elaborate Sylva, would be impracticable. Politian's "Rusticus," "Manto," and "Ambra," are calculated chiefly to display his critical acquaintance with the works of those particular poets to whom they have an immediate reference. But in his "Nutricia," he takes a wider range. This production may be considered as a history of poesy and poets in general. The uses to which this divine art has been subservient from remotest times, the various subjects which it has been employed to celebrate, are here noticed; and the principal bards of every age pass in review before the reader, not so much in order of time, as of subject; each briefly, but distinctly, characterized by the most prominent features of his history, or the principal productions of his

(*c*) To poesy Politian appropriates all the refining and humanizing effects upon mankind in their pristine state of rudeness and incivilization, which Cicero in the commencement of his first book "De Inventione" as fondly ascribes to eloquence. Much indeed of the introductory part of the "Nutricia" may be justly considered as an elegant paraphrase, or rather amplification of the Roman orator's sentiments and language.

muse. It is impossible on perusing this "Sylva" to repress our admiration of its author's unbounded acquaintance with the ancient poets, and with all those circumstances, real or fabulous, that appertain to them, at so early a period in the revival of letters, when many of these classical remains were but newly rescued from obscurity, and few had as yet obtained publicity through the medium of the press. If the noble libraries of Florence furnished him with advantages denied to many others, it must be acknowledged that he improved those advantages with a degree of diligence and felicity which none could exceed. In the latter part of the "Nutricia," Dante, Petrarch, and Boccacio receive the tribute of due praise; the latter for his "Decameron," which Politian evidently considers as a poetical performance. The poem terminates with a pleasing enumeration of the various subjects which have employed Lorenzo's muse, a flattering eulogy of his poetical powers, and a favourable prognostication respecting those of young Piero, Lorenzo's eldest son, the pupil of Politian. This part of the "Nutricia" has been elegantly translated and illustrated by Mr. Roscoe, in his life of Lorenzo de' Medici. Vol. i. p. 314.

As Politian's academical poems at present form the subject of our particular consideration, it would be a culpable omission to leave unnoticed his admirable verses on the "Exile and Death of Ovid;" which doubtless are to be considered as of a similar description; and were probably recited upon the occasion of some of his public lectures on the works of that poet. Though this poem does not occur

in any of the editions of Politian's works, yet no doubt can be entertained that it is the authentic production of this scholar; and various critics have agreed in pronouncing it one of the happiest efforts of his classical muse.

DE EXILIO ET MORTE OVIDII.

Et jacet Euxinis VATES ROMANUS in oris:
Romanum vatem barbara terra tegit.
Terra tegit vatem, teneros qui lusit amores,
Barbara; quam gelidis alluit Ister aquis.
Nec, te ROMA, pudet, quæ tanto immitis alumno,
Pectora habes ipsis barbariora Getis?
Ecquis Io! Musæ, Scythicis in finibus ægro
Tædia qui morbi demeret, ullus erat?
Ecquis, frigidulos qui lecto imponeret artus,
Aut qui dulciloquo falleret ore diem?
Aut qui tentaret salientis tempora venæ,
Aut fomenta manu qui properata daret?
Conderet aut oculos mediâ jam morte natantes,
Aut legeret summam qui pius ore animam?
Nullus erat: nullus. Veteres, tu dura, sodales,
Heu procul a Ponto, Martia Roma, tenes!
Nullus erat. Procul ah conjux, parvique nepotes;
Nec fuerat profugum nata sequuta patrem!
Scilicet immanes Bessi, flavique Coralli,
Aut vos pelliti, saxea corda, Getæ;
Scilicet horribili dederit solamina vultu
Sarmata, ab epoto sæpè vehendus equo?
Sarmata, cui rigidam demisso in lumine frontem
Mota pruinoso tempora crine sonant.
Sed tamen et Bessi extinctum, et flevêre Coralli,
Sarmataque; et durus contudit ora Getes.

Extinctum et montes flebant, et sylva, feræque,
  Et flêsse in mediis dicitur Ister aquis.
Quin etiam pigro concretum frigore Pontum
  Nereïdum lacrymis intepuisse ferunt.
Accurrêre leves Paphiâ cum matre volucres,
  Arsuroque faces supposuêre rogo.
Quem simul absumpsit rapidæ violentia flammæ,
  Relliquias tecto composuêre cado.
Impositumque brevi signârunt carmine saxum:
  "QUI JACET HIC, TENERI DOCTOR AMORIS ERAT,"
Ipsa locum latè sancto Cytherea liquore
  Irrorat niveâ terque quaterque manu.
Vos quoque, Pierides, vati libâstis adempto
  Carmina, sed nostro non referenda sono.

ON THE EXILE AND DEATH OF OVID.

AND finds the ROMAN BARD a foreign grave
Where EUXINE rolls the inhospitable wave!
Thy bard, O LOVE, by rudest hands inhum'd,
Sleeps he, near ISTER's gelid stream entomb'd!
—Those charities, the GETAN fierce supplies
Which ROME, unblushing, to her son denies!

Far from his natal soil—ye Muses, say
What sympathies his dying pangs allay?
On the bland couch who bids his limbs repose?
Who, with sweet converse charms his lingering woes?
Tries with officious hand the salient vein?
Or with emollients, hastes to assuage his pain?
With death suffus'd, who closes now his eye,
And bending o'er him marks his parting sigh?
Ah! none—detain'd in regions far remov'd
Each fond associate, and each friend belov'd.
Ah! none—the ill-fated husband's—father's care,
His spouse—his offspring ROME forbids to share.

Say, can the rude SARMATIAN, school'd to steel
His savage breast,—say can he learn to feel,
Of haggard aspect, who insatiate drains
Life's reeking current from his courser's veins;
'Neath those frore locks that shade his tangled brow,
Say, can that hollow eye with mercy glow?
—Blush, ROMAN, blush;—lo! GOTHS his fate deplore,
And pity meets him on that dreary shore;
His fate—those rocks that heard him, erst, complain,
And brutes, no longer fierce, that mark'd his pain,
In icy grottos NEREIDS learn to weep,
And DANUBE mourns, beneath his chilly deep.

See! VENUS hastening from her favour'd isle
Bids her plum'd flutterers light his funeral pile.—
Then, when the self-exhausted flames decline,
His whitening ashes to their vase consign:
And thus inscribe the stone—"LO HERE HE LIES—
WHO SUNG LOVE'S WILES, SOLICITUDES, AND JOYS."
Herself ambrosial odours sprinkling round,
Thrice, and four times, bedews the hallow'd ground.
Ye too, PIERIAN MAIDS! with plaintive strains
Beyond my flight, embalm your bard's remains.

We cannot, perhaps, more properly conclude our account of these poems than in the words of an approved Italian critic. "Politian, born to rouse the liberal sciences from their long slumbers, penetrating the most hidden sources of Greek and Latin eloquence, possessed as a poet a singular felicity of talent, which enabled him to give the colouring of novelty to materials dexterously collected from the ancients, as above all the rest of his compositions his "Sylvæ" evince; compositions, which are adorned with the choicest flowers of

P. Gravina della Ragion Poetica, lib. i. p. 130. In Napoli, 1716, 8vo.

erudition, and shine with the most vivid flashes of poetry. Of these, the Sylva, entitled "Rusticus," forms an image not only of a finished poem, but of a happy and frugal life. The "Ambra" is no less deserving of admiration, in praise of which it may suffice to say, that it is a just mirror of Homer; to understand whom, and to delineate whose characters, Politian was better qualified than any other of the moderns. Nor has he done less justice to Virgil in his poem entitled "Manto." To the exuberance of his fancy, and that liberty of genius by which intermingling the style and manner of different writers, he alike adapts himself to the sublime, the tender or the humorous, are solely to be ascribed his occasional deviations from that purity of language which characterizes the golden age of Latin composition."

In such honourable literary occupations, intrusted by Lorenzo de' Medici with the education of his children, and in his public character of professor regarded by the liberal youth of Florence and by numerous young foreigners, conspicuous for high birth or promising talents, as the director of their academical studies, Politian passed a great part of his life. His hours of relaxation were spent in the society of his patron, and of other illustrious contemporary scholars, natives of Florence, or who had been attracted thither by the munificence of the Medici. Amongst the more intimate associates of Politian, was Joannes Picus of Mirandula, who was distinguished by literary qualifications and premature attainments of the most extraordinary kind; and whose literary history will occupy a dis-

tinct place in the present volume. Between Politian and Picus subsisted the strictest attachment, and the most friendly communication of studies. The platonic philosopher, Marsilius Ficinus, (*d*) in earlier years the pre-

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(*d*) Joannes Georgius Schelhornius, in his "Amænitates Literariæ," (*Tom.* i. *p.* 18 *et seqq.*) whom Niceron has followed, has given a diffuse Life of Ficinus which Brucker has abridged in his "Hist. Critic. Philosophiæ," (*Tom.* iv. *par.* i. *p.* 48, *et seqq.*) Brucker's abridgement appears to be a correct one, and is in substance as follows:

Marsilius Ficinus was born at Florence, A. D. MCCCCXXXIII. 13 Cal. Nov. His father discharged the office of physician to Cosmo de' Medici. Ficinus congratulates himself upon having had the good fortune to be born at that particular juncture, "*quo, tanquam seculo aureo, liberales disciplinæ, fermè jam extinctæ, Florentiæ fuerint in lucem reductæ.*" *Ep. lib.* ix. *p.* 162.—xi. *p.* 186. At this period the family of Medici, by their powerful patronage and munificent encouragement, had revived the love of letters. Already had Cosmo formed a copious library, and conceived the resolution of restoring the Platonic philosophy. Aware of the necessity of having the works of Plato and the Platonists translated into the Latin language, in order to the accomplishment of such a design, he determined upon educating some young person of promising talents and genius for this express purpose. Ficinus was the youth on whom his choice fell. Beneath the favour and patronage of so distinguished a *Mæcenas*, who spared no expence in his instruction, and provided him with the ablest tutors, he was carefully exercised in the perusal of ancient authors, especially in those of the platonic school. He became, in consequence, less versed in those branches of learning which appertain to elegant literature in general, (in which indeed Ficinus was by no means conspicuous,) than in the depths of ancient philosophical erudition, in which his knowledge was very extensive. The writings of Plato himself, of Plotinus, Proclus, and the rest of the Platonics, with which the liberality of Cosmo supplied him, became familiar to him. To these he added the study of theology, and, at his father's earnest instance, of medicine likewise. Following the example of Pythagoras and Plato, he also became a proficient in music.

Such was the indefatigable industry with which Ficinus pursued his studies, that very early and extraordinary fruits

ceptor, in later the friend and companion of Politian, might in a peculiar sense be consi-

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of his ingenuity were soon manifested to the public; and he became qualified to undertake the version and illustration of the most difficult platonic authors. Yet a youth, as he relates of himself, he translated for his own private use the *Argonautica*, and the *Hymni* of Orpheus, Homer, and Proclus, and the *Theologia* of Hesiod; and when almost a mere boy commented upon Lucretius: but disapproving at a maturer age of these early fruits of his genius, he committed them to the flames. The method of his platonic studies is detailed by himself, *Ep. ad Phil. Valorem, Lib.* xi. *p.* 177.

By such merits commending himself still more to his patrons, the Medici, they loaded him with favours and honoured him with their special friendship. He himself writes, *(Epist. Lib.* i. *p.* 9.*)* that he studied philosophy more than twelve years, in conjunction with Cosmo, who evinced no less acuteness in disputation than prudence and fortitude in governing: that to Plato he owns himself much indebted, but to Cosmo not less: that great man, after the example of the wise Solon, having through the whole of his life intermixed the study of philosophy with his important state occupations, even in those last days when he was about to migrate (to use the words of Ficinus) "ex hâc umbrâ ad lucem," evinced an increased ardour for such investigations, and actually expired immediately after the perusal of Plato's treatise "De Uno Rerum Principio et Summo Bono."

Thus eminently active and distinguished amongst the illustrious members of the platonic academy, stimulated by the example of his patrons, by exhortations and benefits, he advanced with hasty steps towards perfection in this species of erudition. Intent wholly on his studies his secular concerns were overlooked or disregarded by him. Having none of the cares of a parent to impede him, no relatives nearer than nephews and nieces, he found himself tolerably at ease on the revenues of his ecclesiastical preferment. What these were deficient was made up to him by the munificence of the Medici. But philosopher-like, how sparingly he acted in the enjoyment even of these gratuitous favours may be learned from one of his letters "ad Phil. Valorem." His domestics, he observes, who are in his estimation too many, and give him no little trouble, (since being no philosophers they are unwilling to acquiesce in a philosopher's fare,) frequently object to him, that other clients of the Medici had received

dered as compleating this literary triumvirate. Politian ingenuously acknowledges the advan-

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much from their patrons in the space of a few years; that he, on the contrary, a most intimate favourite of this dignified house, and of all their clients, if he may so speak, "clientissimus" in the space of many years had received but little. But, he proceeds to say, what had been conferred upon him had been given spontaneously; others had been obliged in consequence of asking; and that on these terms he doubted not he could have obtained what he pleased. Under such circumstances, notwithstanding the ability and good will of his patrons, it is less to be wondered at that Ficinus was by no means rich. Add to this that he is supposed to have gained little by his practice as a physician, and his ecclesiastical revenues were not large; to which Brucker adds on the authority of Schelhorn: "Valdè pressisse ejus fortunam adversarios. Quas tamen ærumnas dispulit Joan. Medicis Cardinalis beneficentia, cujus curâ canonicatu auctus est."

Ficinus delivered public lectures on the platonic philosophy, and many illustrious Italians are numbered amongst his auditors; amongst whom were Angelus Politianus, Bened. Accoltus Aretinus, Joannes Cavalcantes, and various others. His reputation stood so high in the esteem of the Germans also, that many of their noblest youth repaired to Florence to partake of his instructions: and strong testimonies remain of his paternal kindness, and regard for his scholars. A like celebrity for erudition recommended him to the peculiar notice and friendship of various princes and persons of distinguished rank, such as Pope Innocent VIII. Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, Jacobus Papiensis, and Raphael Riarius, cardinals, and others: "*de quibus videndus Schelhornius.*" *tom.* i. *p.* 56, *et seqq.* It was in such reputation that Ficinus spent a life of philosophic tenour equally remote from ambition and avarice, filling up his time in learned discussions with his friends, the discharge of his public duties as a professor, or the delights of solitary and retired meditation. To the propitious and sacred solitudes afforded him in the retreats of Careggi, and Lorenzo's other country seats, the public became indebted for the learned fruits of his various and profound speculations. Even in the midst of shades, and groves, and rural scenery, he was wont, in society with select parties of his friends, to descant on the deep mysteries of his beloved platonism. Thus he writes to Piero de' Medici, "se, in agro Careggio cum Laurentio Medice deambulantem, multa cum eo mysteria Platonis ultrò citrò-

tages he had received from the conversation of these eminent men. Whilst the diffusion

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que fuisse interpretatum." It has been deemed a matter of surprize that a person so minute of stature "ut qui vix justæ magnitudinis viri lumbos attingeret," of a frame so delicate, and continually struggling with ill health, should have been equal to the task of those voluminous and profound discussions to which the platonic philosophy necessarily led him; "et tantæ molis saxum volvere potuisse." He was of a melancholy temperament, which he laments as a misfortune, imputing it, agreeably to the manner of the times, "constellationi suæ." *Epist. Lib.* iii. *p.* 70. *De Vitâ Sanâ, c.* 10. His works afford abundant proofs how deeply he was influenced by the reveries of judicial astrology. His disposition was gentle, meek, and moderate. Averse to all violent disputes and literary altercations, he neither used on any occasion severe language, nor clamorously asserted his own opinions. Hence, though superstitiously devoted to Plato, he bore with great temper the objections of those who disapproved of his tenets. *Vide ep. ad H. Barbarum. Lib.* viii. *p.* 145. His feeble constitution was supported by extreme temperance and sobriety; and his arduous labours and difficulties surmounted by patience. The pious turn of his writings, and that strong character of religion which pervades his works, is, by some, imputed to the impressions he received from the preaching of Savonarola. *Vide Wharton ad Cave. p.* 112. *Dupin. Biblioth. Eccles. tom.* xiv. *p.* 3.

The infirmities of his mind appear to have borne some analogy to those of his temperament of body. He wanted vigour and accuracy of judgement, with which if he had been furnished, he would have avoided the superstitious attachment manifested by him to the "*Platonismus Alexandrinus*," than which, Brucker observes, no philosophical reveries could possibly be more ridiculous; and would have evinced more sagacity in detecting the "somnia et inania φιλοσοφεμενα" of this sect. But destitute of such helps, it can scarcely be told how egregiously he trifles, extolling "*hujus furfuris philosophastros*," not only above all others, but pronouncing them somewhat more than human. Of this folly proofs may be found in his "Præfationes" to Plato, Plotinus, Iamblicus, &c. He was devoid also of the more splendid and exterior graces of a well cultivated understanding: his style is pronounced inelegant, and his language confused; and Claud. Verdierius is allowed to have been justified in

of useful science was their great and common object, they agreed upon such a friendly dis-

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asserting, " deesse stylo ejus affectuum vim, leporem, venustatem, elegantiam, argutiam, acrimoniam, dignitatem." The bent of his disposition inclined him to embrace with more than ordinary attachment, this " Enthusiasmus Alexandrinus," and to receive with implicit faith the wild visions of the more recent platonists; " Quam ineptientis ingenii labem et credulitatem philosopho indignam says Brucker) detestabili snperstitione demonstravit, quâ apparitionibus, insomniis, ominibus, mirùm quantum tribuit, et maximas rerum civilium mutationes, nescio quibus imaginationis terriculamentis significari, vel siderum positionibus et apparitionibus prædictas fuisse, indignâ philosopho ratione contendit." See his account of the prodigies attendant on the death of Lor. de' Medici. " *Præf. ad Plotinum ;*" and his treatise " De Vitâ Cœlitus Conservandâ, in quo, magno studio hujusmodo ineptias tradidit." For this superstitious propensity, it is asserted, he was on all sides so violently attacked, that the good offices of his friends, particularly of Hermolaus Barbarus, became necessary in order to his defence. On the same account he did not escape the imputation of dealing in magic, from which Schelhornius ably defends him, not without conceding however " eum anilis superstitionis reum agi." Brucker also charges Ficinus with a habit of servile and cringing adulation towards the great and powerful, unworthy of a philosopher, referring to Schelhornius for instances of such meanness; and in this respect imputes to him " impietatem quandam sibi hominum et favorem et benevolentiam conciliandi, quæ non erubuit sacrorum oraculorum effata ad profanam allegoriam transferre."

Schelhornius further enumerates various instances how far his blind and unreasonable attachment to platonism operated to corrupt and depravate his christian principles. Amongst other follies, he ridiculously imagines " Socratem Christum præsignificavisse;" and in his " Dedicatio versionis Dialogorum Platonis," he almost blasphemously says, " Nolite, precor, antiquam salutaremque doctrinam, heu jam diù nimis oppressam, nuper autem in lucem divinâ providentiâ prodeuntem, insequi crudeliter, et opprimere; ne fortè, quam Deus omnipotens vult ubique vivam, mortalis homo frustrà perditam velit. Dextera enim Domini fecit virtutem; dextera Dei jam exaltavit eam: non morietur sed vivet, et enarrabit opera Domini:" But *consulendi sunt de*

tribution of studies as coincided with their several talents and partialities. To Picus were assigned theological subjects; to Ficinus his beloved Plato; while Politian undertook publicly to explain the writings of Aristotle.

Pol. Epist. Lib. x. ep. 14. Lib. xii. ep. 4.

The kindnes of Lorenzo, to which he had, in a great measure at least, been indebted for his education, and which had placed him in easy and affluent circumstances, probably conferred on him the secular priory of the college of S. Giovanni, which he held; and on his entrance into clerical orders, appointed him a

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his et similibus, Wharton, Julius Niger, Schelhorn, Niceron, et alii The chief part of his works are contained in the Paris edition, 1641, in two volumes, folio, amongst which, those of most merit are the "Versiones Platonis et Plotini," especially as he has undertaken to illustrate the obscure parts of Plato's, and more particularly of Plotinus's philosophy, with comments and introductory discourses. But in each translation he is accused of frequent want of fidelity. "Platonem nìà sæpè vertit, non ut ejus mens poscit, sed ut ipsi visum." *(Brucker.)*

Another source of error was that ill-founded opinion he preconceived, that the writings of Plato and Plotinus "veram divinamque philosophiam comprehendebant," and were reconcileable with the sacred writings. Hence he often misconstrues both christianity and platonism, and makes them speak his sense rather than their own. Not fully understanding, moreover, many of the *Placita* of the more recent platonists, rather than own his ignorance, he has put upon them a forced construction, and distorted them "allegoriarum machinis in alienos sensus." *(Idem.)* A like censure is cast upon others of his works. He died "in Careggianis agris" of a fever, A. D. 1499, aged 66. Brucker ludicrously mistakes the following lines of Politian for an epitaph on Ficinus:

> Mores, ingenium, musas, sophiamque supremam
> Vis uno dicam nomine? MARSILIUS.

Ficinus survived Politian; and the above was a compliment to the living philosopher, not to the deceased one.

canon of the cathedral of Florence. (*e*) He generally resided under the same roof with his patron: and was intrusted with the care of his manuscripts which he assisted in collecting; and the arrangement of his extensive library. Lorenzo took a peculiar pleasure in his society, and honoured him with his unreserved friendship.

The writings of Politian furnish us with the most pleasing and satisfactory evidence, respecting the confidence to which he was admitted by his illustrious benefactor. From them, also, much accurate information may be obtained, with regard to the temper and character of the one, and the other, in scenes, and on occasions, when the human disposition displays itself in its native colours, unincumbered by forms, and unrestrained by disguise. The following sportive effusions of Politian's pen, if not otherwise of importance, deserve to be ranked among testimonies of this nature.

(*e*) Ad Laurentium *pro sacerdotio accepto in templo* Divi Pauli, *cum adhuc sub judice lis est.*

Gratatur, Laurens, venienti nuper in urbem
Quantum hominum totâ vivit in urbe, mihi.
Atque omnes taceam studium quos copulat, aut tu,
Quosque vetus nobis vinxit amicitia;
Caupo, auceps, lanius, pistor, cocus, institor, urgent
Hinc me unguit tactu fartor, at inde cocus.
Hic me veste trahit: hinc basior, inde salutor:
Occurro his vultu, lumine, voce, manu.
"Gratamur, Paulum quod habes," vox omnibus hæc est,
"Non habeo Paulum," dico.—"Quid ergo?" "Nihil."

Inter Polit. Poemata.

AD LAURENTIUM MEDICEM.

Cum referam attonito Medices! tibi carmina plectro,
Ingeniumque tibi serviat omne meum,
Quòd tegor attritâ ridet plebecula veste,
Tegmina quòd pedibus sint recutita meis:
Quòd digitos caligæ disrupto carcere nudos
Permittunt cœlo liberiore frui:
Intima bombycum vacua est quòd stamine vestis,
Sectaque de cæsâ vincula fallit ove.
Ridet, et ignavum sic me putat esse poetam,
Nec placuisse animo carmina nostra tuo.
Tu contrà, effusas toto sic pectore laudes
Ingeris, ut libris sit data palma meis.
Hoc tibi si credi cupis, et cohibere popellum,
Laurenti! vestes jam mihi mitte tuas.

While to your praise I consecrate my lyre,
With all the zeal devotion can inspire,
The crowd deride my vest grown old and bare,
My slippers sol'd with oeconomic care,
My time-worn hose, where recent chinks betray
Their slender texture, and admit the day:
My tunic too,—decay'd by length of years
Its silken warp, nought but the woof appears.
"Sloven!" they cry—"nor think Lorenzo deigns
Thee to admire, or listen to thy strains."
—Nathless your suffrage still exalts my lays,
And crowns my temples with the tuneful bays.
To check these sceptics,—still to doubting prone,
Replace my suit, Lorenzo! with your own.

AD EUNDEM GRATIARUM ACTIO.

Dum cupio ingentes numeris tibi solvere grates,
Laurenti! ætatis gloria prima tuæ,

Excita jamdudum, longo mihi murmure tandem
Astitit argutâ Calliopeia lyrâ.
Astitit, inque meo preciosas corpore vestes
Ut vidit, pavidum rettulit inde pedem:
Nec potuit culti faciem dea nôsse poetæ,
Corporaque in Tyrio conspicienda sinu.
Si minùs ergo tibi meritas ago carmine grates,
Frustrata est calamum diva vocata meum.
Mox tibi sublato modulabor pectine versus,
Cultibus assuêrit cum mea Musa novis.

Anxious to pay the thanks your bounties claim,
Lorenzo! glory of the Tuscan name,
See at my call, Calliope appear!
Her lyre's shrill warblings strike my listening ear.
She stood confest;—but gaz'd with wild surprize,
Nor knew her poet in his gay disguise.
The purple glare,—the rustling of brocade,
Startled each sense; and quick she fled, dismay'd.
Since, oft invok'd, she illudes my feeble lay,
Nor aids, the debt of gratitude to pay:
Excuse the strain, and reconcil'd e'er long,
The tuneful maid shall prompt a nobler song.

He seems to have increased in favour with his patron, in proportion to the numerous testimonies of esteem and admiration which he received from his learned contemporaries. In one of his letters to Donatus, he thus expresses himself: "Lorenzo perused your letter; and although he always esteemed me beyond my desert, yet since the perusal of it, I cannot help observing that he seems to think more favourably of me, and caresses me more than before.—When your avocations will per-

mit, write I entreat you, now and then to your friend; under the conviction that you are conferring on me, not merely the obligation of a letter, but stipends, titles of honour, ecclesiastical preferments, and, in a word, all the conveniences of life. For these things I am indebted to the unceasing kindness of Lorenzo: who seems inclined to augment his favours, in proportion to the progress I make in the esteem of such as you: the true and respectable judges of learning and merit." Lib. ii. ep. 13.

The subsequent letters are further illustrative of the confidential nature of that amity which subsisted between Lorenzo and Politian; while they serve to place the writers in no uninteresting point of view.

Laurentius Medices, to Ang. Politianus. Lib. x. ep. 5.

By your letter of which Michelotius (*f*) is the bearer, you inform me of the indifferent state of the health of my little boys.—The news gave me that concern which might be expected in an affectionate parent. Indeed you foresaw this, and have endeavoured to fortify my mind with so many arguments, that, I fear, you entertain no very favourable opinion of my fortitude. Though I know this solicitude is to be considered as a proof of the excess of your affection for me, yet I

(*f*) *Nicolaus Michelotius (Nicolao Michelozzi)* was the private secretary of Lorenzo, "Laurentii Medicis a secretis elegantis homo ingenii." *Polit. Miscel. cap.* lxxvii. Mention also occurs of another learned person of the name of *Bernardo Michelozzi.* "Doctus in utrâque linguâ vir Bernardus Michelotius." *Ibid. cap.* xxiii.

confess, it gave me more concern, than any tidings of my children's indisposition could have done. For though they form a part as it were of the substance of a parent, yet a distempered mind is a misfortune that more nearly affects him than the illness of children. They who possess health and vigour of mind, are above the reach of exterior calamities: but if the mind be weak and disordered, there can be no port so sheltered from the stormy billows of fortune, no sea so tranquil, no warfare so easy, but it will be liable to be agitated and perturbed. And do you then really think me of a temper so imbecile, as to be discomposed by such an event?—But admitting myself to be naturally so constituted, as to be the sport of my own passions,—yet I have surely learned constancy by long experience. I have already known what it is to bear not only the sickness, but the decease of my children. My own father, taken away by a premature dissolution, left me in my one and twentieth year, so exposed to the assaults of fortune, that life became irksome to me. You ought therefore to conclude that experience has given me that fortitude, which nature denied. In your letter to Michelotius, you manifest no small distrust of my firmness of mind: —in that which you address to me, you highly extol my virtues and mental endowments. Is there no contradiction in this? Either the one is untrue,—or you want, yourself, that magnanimity, the want of which you seem to discover in me. You withhold from me the intelligence which you communicate to Michelotius; —as if the information became, in so doing, less your own: and you supposed the

mode of communication would give me more pain than the tidings communicated. But I would not, by enlarging on trifles, fall into the error I impute to you: nor seem, in the same letter, to despise such things, and multiply words about them. If any thing I have now written appear captious or severe, you will overlook it, for the sake of my known affection for you,—and because it is usual for us to be more fluent in abuse than commendation. I truly rejoice to hear that our Julianus applies diligently to his studies: my congratulations to him; and thanks to you, for exciting in him this disposition.—As you have already kindled in his breast a love of letters, still, I entreat you, do all in your power to stimulate his diligence, and engage him to persevere. — I shall speedily rejoin you, and make one of the party with you, in the delightful walks of science. Adieu." *From Pisa. Apr.* 1477.

Angelus Politianus to Laurentius Medices. Lib. x. ep. 6.

"It was not from any doubt of your constancy or discretion, that I addressed the letter concerning your children's indisposition to Michelotius, rather than to you:—but because I was apprehensive it might appear indiscreet in me, to communicate disagreeable intelligence at an improper moment. For the post often delivers letters abruptly; and the secretary seizes on any accidental interval to present them. It was expedient I should thus testify my respectful consideration for Laurentius Medices;

"Cui malè si palpêre, recalcitrat undique tutus." Hor. Satyr. Lib. ii. Sat. i. v. 20.

Nor is there any thing inconsistent in my reverencing you on the one hand, and extolling you on the other: for I venerate you on that very account, because I deem you worthy of the highest praise. These gentle reproofs of yours, are so far from giving me pain, that they serve only to render your kind attentions more pleasing. Julianus,—your brother indeed,—nay in the estimation of men of letters, your other self, is to admiration, his own encourager in literary pursuits, and his own instructor. Nothing is wanting but your presence, to compleat our happiness."

Lib. x, ep. 7.

Angelus Politianus to Laurentius Medices.

" Baptista Leo, (*g*) a Florentine, of the noble family of the Alberti,—a person who

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(*g*) Leo Battista Alberti, distinguished no less as a scholar, than as an artist, was born 1404. While he studied at Bologna, he composed at the age of twenty, a Latin comedy, which he entitled " Philodoxios;" and having published it as a newly discovered work of Lepidus, an ancient comic poet, succeeded in imposing it as such on the learned of those times. What is yet more extraordinary, even in the following century, a descendant of Aldus Manutius, having met with it in MS.—and alike ignorant of its former publication, and the purpose it was intended to serve, printed it again at Lucca, A. D. 1588, still taking it for a precious remnant of antiquity: as appears from the epistle dedicatory addressed by him to Ascanius Persius:—" Lepidam Lepidi, antiqui comici, quisquis ille sit, fabulam ad te mitto, eruditissime Persi:—quæ cum ad manus meas pervenerit, perire nolui; et antiquitatis rationem habendam esse duxi, &c."

" Lorenzo de' Medici, the true Mæcenas of his age," (says du Fresne) " with a view to pass the sultry season more agreeably, having assembled some of the most eminent literary persons in the grove of Camaldoli, amongst whom were Marsilio Ficino, Donato Acciajuoli, Alamanno Rinuccini,

combined exquisite taste, with a highly cultivated understanding, and profound erudition, besides various other valuable compositions with which he has obliged posterity, wrote ten books on architecture, which he had corrected for publication, and intended to inscribe to you; but was prevented by death. His brother Bernardo, a discreet person, and much devoted to you, desirous at the same time of paying the respect due to the memory and will of the deceased, and to your merits, has caused the work to be transcribed and bound, and presents it to you; wishing me to say something in favour of the gift, and of the author. This, however, I was desirous to de-

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Christoforo Landino, and Leon Battista Alberti; and the conversations turning on such topics as might be expected—the latter in several learned discourses satisfactorily proved, that under many of the fictions of the Æneid the sublimest mysteries of philosophy were concealed: and that Virgil was in reality a philosopher, in the disguise of a poet. The substance of his discourses on this occasion, was recorded by Landino, and published in his work, entitled "Disputationes Camaldulenses." Alberti, we are told, was the first to free architecture from the barbarisms of the Gothic ages, and to restore it to its ancient purity: hence he was denominated the "Florentine Vitruvius." He was the author of various works of satire and pleasantry:—among which his "Momus," written in Latin, and twice printed at Rome in the same year, 1520, is particularly distinguished. He also composed a small volume of fables, which for originality of invention are said to vie with those of Æsop. He was likewise the first to adapt his native language to the measures of Latin poetry, of which the following specimen is preserved:

"Questa pur estrema miserabile pistola mando
A te che spregi miseramente noi, &c."

See his life by Rafaelle du Fresne prefixed to Leoni's edition of his architecture, &c. in fol. Lond. 1726.—*Also Vasari, and Roscoe's "Life of Lor. de' Med."*

cline, that I might not detract from the praises due to so finished a work, and so distinguished a person, through want of ability. The work, on being perused, will recommend itself. To do justice to the author, neither the confined limits of a letter, nor poverty of expression on my part will permit. He was one who left unexplored no branch of science: and it remains undecided whether he has more excelled in his prose or in his poetical compositions: and whether his language possesses more dignity or elegance. So well had he studied the remains of antiquity, that he has investigated and exemplified every ancient system of architecture. He is also not only the discoverer of a great variety of curious mechanical inventions, but has furnished admirable designs for edifices; and was himself esteemed an excellent painter and statuary. Yet so accurate was his knowledge in all, as few attain to in single branches of these arts. But of such a person, as Sallust said of Carthage, "I deem it better to say nothing than not as much as I ought."—I wish you, Lorenzo, to give the volume a conspicuous place in your library; to peruse it with attention; and cause it to be published. It is well deserving of general perusal. The patronage of literature, neglected by others, depends solely upon you."

The munificence of Lorenzo to learned men, and his own attachment to letters have been justly celebrated; and Politian does not omit, on proper occasions, to pay him the tribute of praise he so well deserved. He speaks of him as almost the only person of influence who, "amidst the extreme darkness

of the age, had dared to hope for light." He highly extols his acuteness in disputation, his accuracy of discrimination, his wit and eloquence, knowledge of history, and general acquaintance with the sciences; in none of which he was inferior to the most accomplished men of those times. "He is," says he, "the Mæcenas of his age:—and like the Roman Mæcenas, assists men of genius and erudition, with his advice, his wealth, and personal exertions. Himself a man of letters—he relieves, cherishes, maintains, and loads with benefits, the learned of every description." With similar eulogies of the public and private virtues of Lorenzo, the prose writings of Politian every where abound: and whilst in the intercourse of private correspondence his pen is generally animated by this topic to no common pitch of enthusiasm, his poetical effusions, addressed to, or poured forth in honour of such a patron, possess a proportionate degree of elevation. Lib. iii. ep. 6. Lib. xi. ep. 25.

This hyperbolical language might justly subject him to the imputation of flattery, did not the exalted merit of the one in so great a measure apologise for the extravagance of the other. Thus on some incidental occasion we find him indulging the ardour of his muse.

AD LAURENTIUM MEDICEM.

Nescio quos mediâ cœli de sede petitos
Luminibus radios suspicor esse tuis:
Nam quoties oculos in me convertis amicos,
Complector cunctas pectore lætitias.
Tunc faciles subeunt Musæ, tunc ipse videtur
Purus Apollinei sideris esse nitor.

At quoties oculos a me deflectis amicos
Complector nullas pectore lætitias.
Non faciles subeunt Musæ, non ipse videtur
Purus Apollinei sideris esse nitor.
Cur ergo avertis, LAURENTI, lumina? redde,
Redde meis, quæso, lumina luminibus.
Lætitias mihi redde meas; redde, invide, musas,
Quas tua mî rapiunt lumina,—sed propera.

TO LORENZO DE' MEDICI.

AROUND those honour'd brows, what glory plays,
And lights your aspect with celestial rays,
That thus your looks benign a heavenly charm
Emit,—and all my exulting bosom warm!
'Tis then, the Muse propitious tunes my lyre,
And glowing raptures every sense inspire.
But ah! when you the enlivening beam withhold,
Mute is my song, my joyless bosom cold:
Nor more the Muses deign my flights to aid,
But Helicon's bright star is lost in shade.
Then haste, LORENZO! deign the look divine,
Light of my eyes, with yours rekindling mine.
Restore my joys, restore the inspiring Muse,
And on my night the morning beam effuse.

Concerning the state of learning, in the early part and middle of the fifteenth century, Politian writing to Leonicenus, thus expresses himself: "I have lately perused your excellent translation of the commentaries of Galen into the Latin language. It will doubtless prove of real service to posterity: but of our own age, I dare not yet cherish a hope. Such is the force of those prejudices which at pre-

sent render men blind to their true interests, that they would pertinaciously plead for the use of the acorn, even after the discovery of corn: "Glandem defendant repertis frugibus." —Not unlike that Gryllus, with whom Ulysses reasons, in Plutarch, who cannot be prevailed on by any arguments, to consent to relinquish the brutal form into which he had been metamorphosed by Circe, and reassume the human shape." Lib. ii. ep. 4.

It was however, at this period, that the arts and sciences began gradually to revive and flourish:—philosophy, "to be freed," to use the expression of Antiquarius, "from the dust of barbarism," and criticism to assume a manly and rational appearance. The more immediate causes which brought about these desirable events, were, the arrival of the illustrious Grecian exiles in Italy; (*h*) the discovery of ancient manuscripts; the estab- Lib. iii. ep. 21. Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.

(*h*) The fate of Greece, once the seat of science and the muses, is thus deplored by a German poet of the 16th. century.

PROH SCELUS! e Scythicis egressa paludibus, ausu
Effera gens,—campis impunè vagatur in illis,
Hospitium musarum, ubi Athenæ dulce vigebant:
Ducere læta choros nympharum ubi turba solebat,
Arva quatit sonipes, falcato et acinace fulgens
Dira cohors, armis coit, agmina conscia jungens.

O CRIME! what desolating hordes defile
Thy learned shades, and tread that classic soil!
Where Athens stood, the muse's lov'd abode,
And the light nymphs in choral dances trode,
While to barbaric hoofs thy plains resound,
Its pale gleam throws the scymetar around.

Joan. Albini Saxonis de mutationibus regnor. poema; vid. Delitias Poetar. Germanor. Francof. 1612.

lishment of public libraries, and seminaries of education; and especially the invention of

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Constantinople was taken by the Turks, A. D. 1453.—Among the learned Greeks who found an asylum at Florence in the protection of Cosmo de' Medici, were Demetrius Chalcondyles, Joannes Andronicus, Constantius and Joannes Lascaris, &c. The Laurentian library at Florence, which singly, comprized treasures of learning, found its commencement in the zeal of Cosmo de' Medici. It was enriched with many valuable additions by Piero, the father of Lorenzo; and compleated by the latter: of whose ardour in forming this collection, Leonicenus writing to Politian, *(Epist. lib.* ii. *ep.* 7.*)* says, "Missis per universum terrarum orbem nuntiis in omni disciplinarum genere libros summâ ope conquirit: nulli sumptui parcit, &c.—audivi, te referente, vocem illam præclaram ex Laurentii ore prodiisse, optare tanta sibi abs te ac Pico nostro ad libros emendos præstari incitamenta, ut tandem deficientibus sumptibus totam suppellectilem oppignerare cogatur." An eager spirit of enterprize for the recovery of ancient MSS. had characterized the earlier part of the fifteenth century. Poggius had the good fortune to discover a perfect copy of Quintilian in the monastery of S. Gall:—an event of which he gives the following account, in a letter to a friend written from Constance, and dated December 16, 1516. *(Vide Menage, Anti-Baillet.)* "Est autem monasterium S. Galli prope urbem, hinc millia passuum viginti. Itaque nonnulli, animi laxandi, et simul perquirendorum librorum, quorum magnus numerus esse dicebatur, gratiâ, eò perreximus.—Ibi, inter confertissimam librorum copiam, quos longum esset recensere, Quintilianum comperimus, adhuc salvum et incolumem, plenum tamen situ et pulvere squalentem. Erant enim non in bibliothecâ libri illi; ut eorum dignitas postulabat; sed in teterrimo quodam et obscuro carcere: fundo scilicet unius turris, quo ne capitales quidem rei damnati retruderentur." —Landinus in a poem "De Laudibus Poggii" *(Carmina Illust. Poet. tom.* vi. *p.* 118,) alludes to this, and other similar discoveries of the same person:

"Illius ergo manu, nobis doctissime Rhetor,
Integer in Latium, Quintiliane, redis.
Illius atque manu divina poemata Silî
Italicis redeunt usque legenda viris.

printing. Whilst at least so early as the year 1471, Bernardo Cennini and his sons, and after them Antonio Miscomini practised that art at Florence with great elegance, as far as concerned the publication of Latin authors; under the patronage of Piero de' Medici, Demetrius Cretensis, a Grecian exile, was engaged to superintend the Greek press. To his learned labours and the assistance of Demetrius Chalcondyles, posterity is indebted for the first edition of Homer, which magnificent work appeared, A. D. 1488. The same illustrious refugee had some years before given to the Italians the first specimen of an entire volume printed in Greek characters, by publishing in conjunction with Dionysius Paravisinus the "Grammatica Græca" of Lascaris, at Milan, A. D. 1476; and Politian had

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Et ne nos lateat variorum cultus agrorum,
Ipse Columellæ grande reportat opus.
Et te, Lucreti, longo post tempore, tandem
Civibus et patriæ reddit habere tuæ."

Leonardus Aretinus in a letter to Poggius also alludes to MSS. of other Latin authors recovered by the latter. A number of orations of Cicero in particular, are said by his means to have been brought to light.

Eminent scholars were at various times encouraged to make voyages into the east, with a view to the discovery and purchase of ancient Greek authors. We are told that Joan. Aurispa arrived at Venice, A. D. 1423, with 238 MSS. amongst which were the works of Plato, Proclus, Plotinus, Lucian, Xenophon, Arrian, Dio, Diodorus Siculus, Strabo, Callimachus, Pindar, Oppian, Orpheus, &c. Joannes Lascaris was engaged by Lorenzo on a similar expedition, and returned with 200 MSS. but not till after Lorenzo's death. The latter employed men of erudition to make frequent excursions through Italy, &c. with the same view: and on such errands it is said Politian himself was at intervals engaged. *See Mr. Roscoe's Life of Lor. de' Med.*

pleasingly contributed to immortalize the names and ingenuity of these learned artists in the following verses:

In Demetrium Cretensem et Dionysium Paravisinum Græcorum voluminum impressores.

Qui colis Aonidas,—Græcos quoque volve libellos,
Namque illas genuit Græcia non Latium.
En! Paravisinus quantâ hos Dionysius arte
Imprimit, en! quanto cernitis ingenio.
Te quoque, Demetri, ponto circumsona Crete
Tanti operis nobis edidit artificem.
Turce quid insultas! Tu Græca volumina perdis,
Hi pariunt; hydræ nunc age colla seca.

Woo'st thou the Nine?—these Grecian tomes peruse;
From Greece, not Latium sprung each tuneful Muse.
Here—on each page imprest—conspicuous shine
Thy pow'rs inventive, great Paravisine;
Thine too, Demetrius, nurs'd on foreign shores
Where round Jove's isle the sea incessant roars.
Proud Turk! creative they thy rage confound—
Strike then—our fruitful Hydra courts the wound.

Indeed no branch of science was cultivated with greater ardour than classical literature: under the peculiar patronage of Lorenzo, and of some of the chiefs of other states in Italy, who imitated his liberality, eminent scholars engaged with incredible ardour and diligence, in collating manuscripts, and ascertaining the genuine text of Greek and Latin authors; explaining their obscurities, illustrating them

with commentaries, translating them into various languages, and imitating their beauties.

The "MISCELLANEA" of Politian (*i*) first published at Florence, A. D. 1489, were every where received with the greatest applause. They were compared by the learned to the "Noctes Atticæ" of Aulus Gellius. In consequence of the publication of them, he received letters from all parts, full of kindness and congratulation. "Nec plures Jasoni et Cadmo, satu dentium nati sunt hostes," (says the author himself) "quam mihi, satu Miscellaneorum nati amici." Lib. iv. ep. 12. Lib. iv. ep. 5.

"Nor think," says Guarinus, "that letters are the only instruments of your praise. Still more for your honour, are those sentiments, which silently arise in the breasts of all lovers of polite literature, on perusing the work. In public too, every individual speaks of you in the handsomest terms; applauds your erudition, and loads you with praises. Regardless of the expence, each purchases your "Miscellanea," which he considers as a treasure of knowledge, and carries home with exultation. These are genuine acknowledgments of your erudition, in which there can be no deceit."—"I find in the "Miscellanea," Lib. i. ep. 2. says Leonicenus, "not only much informa-

(*i*) Politian inscribes his "*Miscellanea*" to Lorenzo de' Medici; at whose request they were published. "Cum tibi superioribus diebus, Laurenti Medices, nostra hæc miscellanea inter equitandum recitaremus, delectatus arbitror novitate ipsâ rerum; et varietate non illepidâ lectionis, hortari cœpisti nos ut unam saltem ex eis centuriam (nam centenis libri singuli capitibus explicantur,) publicaremus." *Ad Laur. Med. Præfatio.*

tion that conduces to the understanding of the ancient poets and orators, but also various passages of medical and philosophical writers ingeniously illustrated; and placed in a clearer point of view by you, than by any other writer."

Ep. Lib. ii. ep. 3.

It is thus that Jacobus Antiquarius, writes to Politian on the same subject. "Going lately, according to my custom, to one of the public offices at Milan: I found several young men who are employed there, neglecting the business of the state, and deeply engaged in the perusal of a book, the leaves of which had been distributed among them.—I enquire what new work is come abroad.—They answer, "the Miscellanies of Politian." I ascend;—take my place among them; and read with equal eagerness:—delighted with the contemplation of those talents, which begin to distinguish the present times; which appear unequal to no undertaking; and evidently form themselves on the model of classical antiquity. Unable to spend much time here, I send to purchase a copy from the bookseller:—which my servant has no sooner brought, than I begin to turn over the leaves at home with more attention. Among the first words,—in the very dedication, I read with transport the name of Laurentius Medices. The preface greatly enhances my expectation of that literary banquet, of which it is a foretaste. I run over the chapters: every where profound erudition: every where that variety, which keeps curiosity awake. And, what evinces great ability, and indefatigable labour; every observation is confirmed by the testimony of so many, and such respectable authorities, that he who is most desirous of

finding fault with the work, may bark indeed but cannot bite. On you, immortality awaits: you have taken her by the forelock." Lib. iii. ep. 18.

To enlarge upon the merits of those critical remarks on ancient authors, emendations of corrupted, and elucidations of difficult and obscure passages, contained in the "MISCELLANEA" of Politian; or to attempt to shew how far succeeding philologists have dissented from, or sanctioned them with their approbation, falls not within the limits of our present design. But the "Miscellanea" contain also passages of a more generally interesting nature, which furnish some anecdotes of Politian and of contemporary scholars not elsewhere to be found, and throw a pleasing light upon the literary disputes and studies of the times.

"Argyropylus of Byzantium, (*k*) my former preceptor in philosophy," says Politian, "was, though a native of Greece, by no means indifferent to Latin literature: and was regarded as a person extensively conversant in every branch of erudition. Highly honoured and respected, as well by Cosmo de' Medici as by his son Piero, and his grandson Lorenzo, the present ornament of his country, and heir of the virtues of his great progenitors; to the

(*k*) Joannes Argyropylus was one of those learned Greeks who sought an asylum in Italy, on the taking of Constantinople by Mahomet II. and was the first public professor of Greek at Florence: but finally settled at Rome, where he died in 1474. To him, as well on his departure from Florence, as on other occasions, Politian addressed several Greek epigrams, which may be found in Hody *(de Græcis Illustr.)* and *inter Poemata Politiani.*

former he inscribed the books of Aristotle which he translated into the Latin language: the latter, when scarce arrived at the age of manhood, was instructed by him in that part of the Aristotelian philosophy which relates to dialectics and morals. But, like a zealous Greek, he was vehemently offended at Cicero, on account of a passage in his works, in which, with no less eloquence than truth, he maintains that the Greek language itself sometimes fails in its boasted copiousnes of expression, "Græciam verborum interdum inopem quibus se putat abundare;" an accusation to which even Theodore Gaza could subscribe. So angry, however, was the Greek professor at the parent and prince of Latin eloquence, for the reason before-mentioned, that, incredible as it may appear, he dared openly to brand Cicero as a mere *sciolist*, not only in philosophy, but also "*(si diis placet)*" in Greek literature! Indeed it can scarce be said that this nation would ever with a good grace, allow us natives of Latium, the credit of participating their language and erudition. According to them, we possess merely the straw and chaff of literature, they the grain; we the parings, they the substance; we the shell, they the kernel.

Miscel. cap. 1.

Domitius Calderinus (*l*) had been a professor of considerable eminence antecedently to

(*l*) Baillet and M. de la Monnoye assert that his real name was Domenico, but that "voulant en avoir un qui sentît ancienne Rome,"—he chose that of Domitius. From Caldiero, famous for its hot baths, where, according to them, he was born, he derived the surname of Calderinus. They add, that as this place is near Verona, he is generally

the time of Politian's public appearance in the like character. When, however, the star of

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said to have been of Verona. Maffei, however, says that he was born at "Torri sul lago," and died at Rome, A. D. 1477, at the age of thirty-two.

> Te scelerata lues, sextâ trieteride nondum
> Bis Domiti! elapsâ, mittit ad Elysios.

Such was Calderini's early reputation, that at the age of twenty-four he was invited by Paul II. to take upon him the office of public lecturer on the belles lettres at Rome. From Sixtus IV. he received the appointment of Segretario Apostolico. To him is attributed the praise of having first pointed out and exemplified the true method of elucidating ancient authors, by combining with verbal criticism the lights of antiquarian research, and general erudition. Lucio Fosforo, bishop of Segna, a scholar of great respectability, and one of Politian's correspondents, judges no critic of later ages worthy to rank with the latter, except Laurentius Valla, and Domitius, "præter unum et alterum, Laurentium Vallam me puero, et nuper Domitium Calderinum, quos quidem non laudare et admirari nefas." *(Pol. Ep. Lib.* iii. *ep.* 10.) "Ecce tibi solutum ænigma Laurentio Vallæ et Domitio Calderino, Angelum Politianum adjicio, et quasi Triumviratum creo." *(Ibid.)*

Maffei observes that the literary reputation of Domitius procured him many rivals, while living; as Georgius Merula, Aurispa, Ang. Sabinus, Nicolaus Perottus, Geor. Trapezuntius, &c. and that Politian, ten years after his death, draws his character with much more blame than praise. Among other works of Domitius, edited and inedited, the same diligent writer enumerates an ample commentary on Martial, printed Venetiis, 1474, in folio; and inscribed to Lorenzo de' Medici. In this work he is charged with many errors; yet according to P. Raderus, he was the first to throw light on many of that author's obscure passages. His commentary on Juvenal, "cum defensione et recriminatione adversus Brotheum Grammaticum" under which name he understands Angelus Sabinus, who was assisted by Perottus, was printed at Rome in the same year as the preceding. The edition of Virgil of 1492, has some notes of his, among others. He commented on Ovid's Metamorph. Persius, and Catullus. His notes "in Ibin" were published Venet. 1485; on the Sylvæ of of Statius, Brixiæ, 1476, with a dissertation on the

Politian began to rise in the literary hemisphere, that of Calderinus was already in its

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letter of Sappho, *(inter Ovidii Heroid.)* and another on the most difficult passages of Propertius, addressed to Francesco d' Arragona, son of Ferdinando, king of Naples.

His poetical talents may in some degree be estimated from two epigrams composed "all' improviso;" the first against "L'Aurispa, Letterato Siciliano;" the second, on the excessive devotion, manifested especially by the Roman ladies of those days, at the funeral ceremonies of a supreme pontiff.

Esse Aurispa caput dum Veronensibus inquis
Insanum, ex patriâ crederis esse meâ.
Ast ego, cum Siculos mendaces dixero, certè
Nemo me ex patriâ dixerit esse tuâ.

All Veronese when rashly you malign
As fools, the world to think you one incline.
Not dreading to be term'd Sicilian, I
The assertion risque—Sicilians all will lie.

Pontifici summo fierent dum funera nuper,
Oscula defuncto fœmina, virque dabat.
Vidi ego virgineam certatim currere turbam,
Et rosea in nigris figere labra genis.
Posthàc si sapiet, præsul quicunque futurus,
Ipse sibi vivo funera constituet.

Assembled round the breathless pontiff's bier
I saw, as throng'd each sex the kiss to share,
His pallid cheeks by virgin lips caress'd,
Senseless what rosy lips the kiss impress'd;
Each future pontiff, might I dare advise,
Living, would antedate his obsequies.

To the foregoing account may be added that of P. Jovius; who observes, that Domitius owed his education to the pa-

decline, and he died about ten years before the "Miscellanea" were composed. Of his talents, application, and skill in Latin literature, Politian speaks in handsome terms; and acknowledges that his proficiency in Greek was not inconsiderable: but adds, that so vain was he of his own talents, and so tenacious of any opinion he had once adopted, as to adhere to it in open defiance of conviction and truth. The style of his compositions is haughty, contemptuous and overbearing, he cavils on every trifling pretext, and attacks all without discrimination. These were propensities which involved him in numberless disputes with the learned of the day. Yet while he was the object of undisguised hatred, to persons of this description, such was his authority in letters, that even in his youth he carried away the palm of celebrity, from all the Roman professors. But reputation, not truth, was the object of this professor's aim. In his conjectures, which were not seldom unfortunate, and frequently unsupported by authorities, he still persisted with unblushing audacity, and had often recourse to ambiguous phrases, false colouring, wilful perversion, and the like

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tronage of Cardinal Bessarion; that his remarks on obscure passages of classic authors were received at Rome with great applause; and that the publication of his commentaries certainly excited bitter contentions among the learned; but these very contentions were useful to students, and of service to the cause of letters. Calderini, he adds, affected a high tone in his writings, and was too severe and intemperate in his reflections on the mistakes of others. He was carried off by a sudden disease in the midst of his career. His funeral was solemnized by the attendance of the members of the academy; the noble youth put on mourning, and his loss was sincerely regretted.

mean arts to conceal his ignorance. Merula was the first to call in question the infallibility of this assuming champion, by detecting various errors in his notes upon the works of Martial. Politian, at an early period of his professorship, had also cautioned his hearers against too implicit an acquiescence in the decisions of Calderinus, and more particularly controverts many of his sentiments in his "Miscellanea." "What, however," says he, "upon the whole, are my sentiments respecting Domitius, on balancing his faults and good qualities together, may be judged from the following epigram of mine, which Baccius Ugolinus of Florence, and Angelus Maffeius of Verona, out of veneration for that scholar's memory, caused to be inscribed on a marble monument on the banks of the "Lago di Garda," the native soil of Domitius, about nine years ago."

ADSTA viator! pulverem vides sacrum,
Quem vorticosi vexat unda Benaci,
Hoc mutat ipsum sæpè Musa Libethron
Fontemque Sisyphi, ac vireta Permessi,
Quippe hoc DOMITIUS vagiit solo primùm,
Ille,—ille doctus, ille quem probè nôsti
Dicta dantem Romuleæ juventuti
Mira eruentem sensa de penu vatum.
Abi, viator, sat tuis oculis debes. (*e*)

(*m*) Speaking of this tribute of respect by Politian, to the memory of Domitius, Maffei terms it "noto elogio, che si vede in Torri nobilmente scolpito in publica pietra." He believes Politian composed these iambics on the very spot which they celebrate. It appears from Politians's "prefatio in Suetonium," that he visited the place of Calderini's nativity in quest

Pause, traveller, and mark this hallow'd strand,
Lash'd rude Benacus! with thy eddying wave;
For this, Libethron oft the Muses leave,
The fount Sisyphian, and that verdant land
Water'd by soft Permessus; cradled here,
This soil Domitius hail'd, her nursling; He,

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of an ancient MS. which the latter had been heard to boast of having in his possession: "Nos adolescentes ipsum meminimus audire Domitium cum diceret habere se peculiarem Marii Rustici librum quem ceteris incognitum de Galliâ attulisset. Atque ego quidêm studio incogniti mihi scriptoris incensus, etiam ad ipsius Domitii parentes, Benaci lacûs accolas, accessi; omnemque ejus librorum suppellectilem scrutatus, Marium certe hunc Rusticum inveni nusquam." *(Maffei Verona Illustrata.)*

Besides the verses abovementioned, Politian also composed the following sepulchral inscription for his literary rival.

Hunc Domiti siccis tumulum qui transit ocellis,
Vel Phœbo ignarus, vel malè gratus homo est.
Intulit hic vatum coecis pia lumina chartis;
Obstrusum ad Musas hic patefecit iter.
Hunc Verona tulit, docti patria illa Catulli;
Huic lethum atque urnam Roma dedit juveni.

Here rests Domitius: who denies a tear,
Ingrate is he, or not to Phœbus dear;
On learning's darksome page the lucid ray
He pour'd, and op'd to song the obstructed way.
Amid thy native haunts, Catullus! born,
Rome mourn'd his timeless fall, and consecrates his urn.

Politian had, in his youth, been honoured by a very flattering compliment from Domitius. Having in the presence of several learned men stated his sentiments respecting a particular passage in Catullus, that professor received his observations with so much applause, as ingenuously to confess, that he had, that day, learned more from a single student, than he had done, in the course of many years, from any professor. *(Vide Miscel. cap.* xix.*)*

Though dead, alike to fame survives and thee,
Who vers'd profound in depths of classic lore
To Rome's admiring youth reveal'd the store.
Traveller, depart, and hold the record dear.

Jacobus Antiquarius, the friend and correspondent of Politian, probably thought more favourably of Calderini's literary integrity. "Why," he asks, "should you so frequently combat with Domitius as with a phantom, since he has long since ceased to exist among us. He did his utmost to benefit literature. He was among the first to cleanse ancient authors from their dust and defilement. Either by emulating or imitating your example, Politian! he would, had he still lived, daily have improved in the art of terse, and polished composition. In attacking Domitius, you seem to me to attack a leader of great respectability in the advanced guard of letters. He was taken away as you well know by a premature death: otherwise he would possibly have corrected such passages of his works, as bear the marks of haste and inconsideration. Those who have not erred intentionally, should not, in my opinion, be capitally arraigned. Domitius was one of us; and he has left monuments of his industry which do him no dishonour."

Ep. Pol. Lib. iii. ep. 18.

The learned subject of our enquiries, like the Roman orator, has not omitted to amplify the difficulties of his own art. He observes, that whosoever undertakes to unravel the mysteries of the ancient poets, should first have performed his lucubrations, before the lamp, not

Vide Ciceron. De Oratore, Lib. i.

only of Aristophanes, (*n*) but also of Cleanthes; and asserts a thorough and intimate acquaintance with the writings of the philosophers, civilians, naturalists, dialecticians, critics of antiquity, and, in short, with the whole circle of sciences, to be requisite in order to this arduous undertaking. Forgetful of no incident which might serve to display to advantage his own literary powers, he informs us, that being on a particular occasion at Verona, he explained in a single lecture the whole of Catullus, in the shop of an artizan, in which he and his auditory had been compelled by a shower of rain to take refuge. On this occasion were present, one of the learned family of the Guarini, a descendant of Dante, the Florentine poet, two professors of Verona, and a considerable number of young students, at whose earnest solicitations he undertook this office, and who not only listened with the most eager attention, to his observations, but even carried their applause so far as repeatedly to exclaim "demissum cœlitùs An-

(*n*) Politian probably alludes in this passage to Aristophanes, the Byzantine grammarian, to whom the learned attribute the invention of prosody, accentual marks, and the earliest kind of stops or pauses, used in writing. He was a scholar of Callimachus and Zenodotus; and Salmasius places him about the one hundred and forty-third olympiad. The same learned critic has given a particular account of Aristophanes, and his invention; whence he has introduced some interesting *criteria* whereby to distinguish the antiquity of inscriptions, MSS. &c. *(See his correspondence with Sarrau, inter Epist. Gudii et doctorum: curante Burmanno. ep.* 183, *et seqq. Edit. Hag. Com.* 1714, 4to.*)* The stoic philosopher Cleanthes, whose nights were spent in drawing and carrying water, and his days in the acquisition of knowledge, is no stranger to the classical reader.

gelum sibi, qui poetam conterraneum interpre-
Miscellaneor. cap. xix. taretur."

Politian claims the merit, (if merit it can be called) of first solving the enigma, which Gellius cites from Varro, and leaves unexplained, "ut legentium conjecturas acuat." It is as follows:

SEMEL minusne, an bis minus, non sat scio,
An utrumque horum, ut quondam audivi dicier,
Jovi ipsi regi noluit concedere. (*o*)

From "semel minus," and "bis minus" results "ter minus." TERMINUS, therefore, in the opinion of Politian, is the solution. It was Terminus who refused to give place to Jupiter when the capitol was about to be
Fastor. Lib. ii. erected. Thus Ovid:

QUID nova cum fierent Capitolia;—nempe deorum
Cuncta Jovi cessit turba, locumque dedit.
Terminus, ut veteres memorant, inventus in æde
Miscellaneor. c. xxxvi. Restitit, et magno cum Jove templa tenet.

(*o*) ERASMUS was presented by the archbishop of St. Andrew's, son of James, king of Scotland, his pupil, with a ring, which was embellished with a gem bearing an engraved figure of Terminus. That scholar thought he discovered in this emblematical divinity an apt memento of death. "Mors enim," says he, "verè Terminus est, qui nulli cedere voluit." Willing to turn this moral hint, as he expresses himself, "ad vitæ correctionem," and to perpetuate its effect, he adopted Terminus as the device for his seal, adding in the field or middle of the impression, "CONCEDO NULLI;" and around the verge, "ΟΡΑ ΤΕΛΟΣ ΜΑΚΡΟΥ ΒΙΟΥ," and "MORS ULTIMA LINEA RERUM." Though the moral intention of this device could not be obscure, yet the motto, "*concedo nulli*," appears to have given great offence to many, and to have drawn upon Erasmus the imputation of insufferable vanity. "Un cordelier, nommè Carvajal," says Bul-

Other passages of the "Miscellanea" incidentally call the reader's notice to the spirit of antiquarian research, and the enthusiasm for collecting and studying the remains of ancient art, which accompanied the revival of learning. "I lately saw, says Politian, "in the vestibule of the Mellini palace at Rome, a marble fragment, which appeared to have been the base of an antique statue, bearing the following inscription:

ΣΕΛΕΥΚΟΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΛΥΣΙΠΠΟΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ,

which signifies in Latin, "Seleucus rex. Lysippus faciebat." Joannes Laurentius, (*p*) a

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lart, " s'emportant pardessus les autres, l' attaqua chaudement en cette sorte. Erasme se fache (dit-il) de ce que les evangelistes sont reduits au nombre de quatre, et qu' il n' y peut estre compris; croyant qu' il ne leur est pas inferieur, et qu' il n' a point de superieur dans la doctrine: car il met au bas de tous ses écrits ces paroles pleines d' orgueil, *Je ne cede à personne;* et afin que l' on n' ignore pas cette folie, il y ajoûte l' effigie du dieu Terme, imprimée dans la cire; lequel dieu ne cedoit pas mesme à Jupiter. Cette insolence ne surpasse-t' elle pas toutes les insolences? Que dites vous, Erasme? Ne cedez vous pas à Budé, à Capnion, à Clicthovée, à Pic de la Mirandole, à Ange Politien? *Je ne cede*, dit-il, *à personne.* Ne cedez vous pas à Saint Ambroise, à Saint Augustin, à Saint Hierosme? *Je ne cede à personne.* Non pas à Saint Hilaire, à Saint Cyprien, à Lactance, à Origene? *A personne.*—O! le siecle heureux, qui nous a donné un tel homme." Vide *Bullart Academie des Sciences, et des Arts. Tom.* ii. *p.* 163, *in fol. Amst.* 1682: and, *Erasmi opera, tom.* ix. *p.* 1442—3. *Editionis Frobenianæ. Basil.* 1540, *in fol.* where Erasmus very pleasantly vindicates himself from these injurious aspersions.

(*p*) JOANNES LAURENTIUS had the reputation of an excellent antiquary, and was eminent for his skill in decyphering and explaining Greek and Latin inscriptions. He was secretary to Pope Innocent VIII. He translated two of

Venetian, the pope's secretary, was then with us, a person deeply skilled in both languages,

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the "Opuscula" of Plutarch: "Quomodo ab Adulatore discernatur Amicus:" *Romæ*, 1514, 4to. and "De Curiositate et Nugacitate:" *ibid.* 1523. His books and other effects descended by inheritance to his brother, whose tragical catastrophe is related by Burcardo d' Argentina, in his "Istoria Arcana di Alessandro VI." *p.* 87, *ed. Hanov.* 1697, *in* 4to.

The taste for collecting "lapide antiche," (says Foscarini, *della Letter. Venez.*) commenced in the fifteenth century. Giovanni Marcanova, a Venetian, though deemed by some a Paduan, Ciriaco de' Pizzicolli, Felice Feliciano, Pomponio Leto, and Jacopo Antiquario, are mentioned as the first, or among the first, who cultivated this study. Andrea Santa Croce also composed "Un Libro di Lapide Latine," in the pontificate of Pius II. which he inscribed to the cardinal of Pavia, (one of Politian's correspondents) an inedited work; and Domenico Grimani, made cardinal in 1497, by Alexander VI. whose expensive collections of this nature are celebrated by various authors. See Politian's letter addressed to him, and Pizzamano. *(Ep. Lib.* iv. *ep.* 7.*)*

Amongst those who distinguished themselves by similar researches, Agostino Maffei is also deserving of special mention. This learned ecclesiastic was originally of Verona; but together with two of his brothers became resident at Rome: where we find them in high consideration with its court and pontiff, in the time of Paul II. and of several of his successors. He deserves to be ranked among the Veronese writers, on account of an elegant letter of his, which occurs among those of Politian, and has respect to that scholar's version of Herodian: but he may with still greater reason be placed among the principal encouragers of literature and learned men. His countryman, Scipio Maffei, *(Verona Illustrata)* pronounces him the very first person who aided classical researches by a methodical collection of antiques. "Costui fu il primo, chi a gli studi porgesse aiuto col raccogliere antichità erudite, e formar Museo, di MSS. di statue, di medaglie, e d' ogni genere di monumenti facendo incetta." Domitius Calderinus in his commentaries on the "Sylvæ" of Statius, published at Brescia, A. D. 1476, and inscribed to Agostino Maffei, on a passage of the fourth book relating to a statue of Hercules, has the following expression: "Hæc Sylva tota tua est, Augustine, continet enim laudem imaginis antiquæ et signorum, quorum tu

and a great admirer of these classical remains. He justly observed, that the word "ἐποίει" was by no means undesignedly substituted for "ἐποίησεν;" since, as Pliny in the preface to his "Natural History," observes, the greatest artists were wont to inscribe their works when finished "pendenti titulo." Thus did Apelles and Policlitus, as if their art were always in an incipient and imperfect state; and that in opposition to the variety of judgments which might be passed upon his work, the artist might enjoy, as a privilege generally allowa-

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studiosissimus es, gloriam extollit." *(Vide Maffei ut supra.)* Politian *(Ep. Lib. 6. ep. 7.)* makes Augustinus Maffeius this acknowledgment: "You entertained me when at Rome the last summer, in your own house, and most obligingly exhibited to me your very numerous and rich collection of ancient books and monuments, in which I take a singular pleasure. You — all the learned regard with reverence; yourself a learned man, and a patron of letters." He mentions a very ancient and unpublished grammatical work, which (having merely solicited to borrow it from Maffei) the latter had munificently and freely presented to him. *(Ibid.)* Pomponius Lætus, dedicating to Augustinus his edition of Sallust, denominates him, "*Thesaurus rerum Romanarum;*" "Augustino Mafeo Rerum Romanorum Thesauro;" alluding to his extensive collections of ancient and classical remains.

The collection begun by Agostino continued to receive new and valuable acquisitions through the zeal of his successors, and, by a singular good fortune, remained in the same family for more than a century. No collection that adorned the venerable city of Rome, says Maffei, has been more frequently mentioned and referred to by good authors than this. *(Vide Verona Illustrata.)*

Among the earliest promoters of antiquarian research, Politian's patron must not be forgotten. Not only the Codices, but the Marmora, the Numismata of Laurentius Medices were perpetual sources of information to Politian; and he is continually citing them. *(Vide Miscellanea ejus &c. passim.)*

ble and understood, the free liberty of amending any thing that appeared to stand in need of correction, whilst he had not precluded himself from it. A remarkable instance of modesty in such men, thus so to inscribe every individual work which they executed, as to convey the idea that it was the last in which they engaged ;—and that death prevented them from giving to each the perfection of which it was susceptible.

Miscell. cap. xlvii.

In the concluding pages of this work, Politian acquaints his readers, that having, in the year preceding their publication, arranged his "Miscellanea" nearly in their present form, and submitted the manuscript to the inspection of his friends, a report was clandestinely propagated, that he had purloined all the valuable part of his materials from the "Cornucopia" of Nicolaus Perottus. (*q*) That

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(*q*) Nicolao Perotto, archbishop of Siponto, was born at Sassoferrato, in Umbria. He flourished about the year 1470. He had a very considerable acquaintance with the Latin and Greek languages; and his literary merits and industry raised him to the archbishopric of Siponto. He died at Sassoferrato, in the villa said to have been named by him Fugicura. His literary productions are, a Latin translation of Polybius; and "Commentariorum Linguæ Latinæ Volumen," entitled "Cornucopiæ," published after his decease. *(Vide Freherum, et P. Jovium.)*

Nicolaus Perottus, Saxoferratensis, Sipontinus episcopus, cujus præclarum opus, "Cornucopiæ, seu Commentariorum Linguæ Latinæ Volumen," (quod idem commentarius in Martialem est) omnem Latini sermonis elegantiam et rationem nisu eximio complectitur; tum quæ apud Martialem occurrit, tum quæ ad Martialem ex aliis ab ipso afferuntur. Optima ejus editio prodiit apud Aldum, Venetiis; anno 1513, quæ postmòdum Basileæ apud Curionem et Walderum aliquoties iterata est. Et sanè, honor illi viro habendus primo purioris linguæ Latinæ collectori; unde sua præcipuè derivârunt, qui post illum scripsêre. Equidem amolitur a se

work, not then published, appears to have remained in the possession of the duke of Urbino, to whom its author had inscribed it; and to the interest which Lorenzo de' Medici possessed with that prince, malevolence attributed Politian's access to the manuscript. The injured professor, informed of this rumour, "quickly," as he expresses himself, "recognised the manoeuvres of envy, who, Proteus-like, changes herself into all shapes, for the accomplishment of her malignant purposes:

"Spumat aper, fluit unda, fremit leo, sibilat anguis:"

Indignant at so dishonourable an attack upon his reputation, he determined to delay for a short season the publication of his Miscellanies; and in conjunction with his beloved friend Picus of Mirandula, to devote this interval to philosophical studies. Whilst he was thus employed, the "Cornucopia" of Perottus, as he had probably foreseen, is made public. "Seized," adds Politian, "with ge-

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intentatum crimen istud Angelus Politianus in Miscellaneis, cui objectum fuerat, &c.—Sed si excusandus est Angelus, certè non idem merentur alii Perotti strenui transcriptores. Hos inter, non minimus Ambrosius Calepinus, &c." *(Vide Morhof. Polyhist. Lib.* iv. *cap.* ix.*)*

Politian, in the conclusion of this vindication of himself from the charge of plagiarism, observes, "Pereant," Donatus aiebat, "qui ante nos nostra dixerunt. Nos ei prospera faustaque precamur et cupimus, qui nostra post nos aut invenit aut certè dixit." *(Miscell. cap. ult.)* "Festivum est," (says Morhoff in a passage which happens to illustrate the foregoing) "quod Hieronymus (et ex eo Menagius) ad illum Ecclesiastæ, "Nihil sub sole novum," de Donato, præceptore suo, refert; eum, cum illa Terentii explicaret "Nihil dictum quod non dictum sit priùs," stomachantem et indignabundum identidem exclamâsse, "Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt." *(Polyhist. Lib.* vii. *cap.* i.*)*

neral avidity, it is emptied, as it were, to the very bottom, and its contents are anxiously scrutinized. Politian stands fully acquitted from the charge of plagiarism. Then might you easily discern in the countenances of certain persons, the lowering cloud of sullen disappointment, intermingled with that self-accusing blush which suffused the cheek of Plato's Thrasymachus."

Miscell. cap. ult.

Politian's Latin version of "HERODIAN," is universally allowed to be a masterly performance: and perhaps no other translation of any Greek author has been so much, and so generally admired. Some critics have declared, that if the Greek of Herodian could have been suppressed, this work might have passed among the learned, for the classical and finished production of some original pen of antiquity. (*r*) Yet probably Politian, like other

(*r*) Those who were desirous to decry, but dared not refuse to acknowledge the excellency of this translation of Herodian, are said to have accused Politian of having surreptitiously published as his own, a version previously made, by Gregorius of Tiphernum: whilst others, probably with great reason, doubt the existence of such a version. M. de la Monnoye maintains, that Omnibuono, a native of Lunigo, near Vicenza, commonly denominated *Omnibonus Leonicenus Vicentinus*, was the author of this prior version. Part of Omnibuono's version (viz. Severi Imperatoris Deificatio) is inserted by Flavius Blondus, in his "Romæ Triumphantis, *Lib.* ii." *p.* 44, *et seqq.* and Menckenius himself is compelled to acknowledge, that Politian had seen at least this part of Omnibuono's work, and made use of it to his own advantage. The parallel passages adduced by Menckenius from M. de la Monnoye, are as follows:

LEONICENUS.

"Mos est Romanis consecrare imperatores, qui super-

authors, was sometimes led to estimate the value of his works, by the labour bestowed upon them; which may account for the slight terms in which he speaks of this translation, in the following letter.

Angelus Politianus to Andreas Magnanimus.

"You say my "Herodian" is loudly called for by the printers: mine I may justly term him, since I have given him a Latin existence. You also desire me to return your copy which formerly belonged to me. As it is their wish, I send it to you with my corrections, in which however I have been sparing, rather than free. Not but that you will find in the volume more errors of mine than of the transcriber. But certainly more allowance is due to the pen of the translator, than to the author's; since Lib. iv. ep. 13.

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stitibus filiis vel successoribus moriuntur. Et ejusmodi honorem deificationem appellant: luctus quidem per omnem urbem ostenditur, festâ celebritate permixtus. Corpus enim defuncti, pro ritu hominum, sumptuoso funere sepeliunt; sed ceream imaginem defuncto simillimam fingunt, quam sub vestibulo prætorii proponunt in eburneo lecto magno atque sublimi, vestibus aureis instrato."

POLITIAN.

"Mos est Romanis consecrare imperatores, qui superstitibus filiis vel successoribus moriuntur. Quique eo sunt honore affecti, relati dicuntur inter divos. Est autem totâ urbe quasi luctus quidam festæ celebritati promiscuus. Quippe functum vitâ corpus ritu hominum sumptuoso funere sepeliunt. Sed ceream imaginem defuncto quam simillimam effingunt, eamque in regiæ vestibulo proponunt, supra eburneum lectum maximum atque sublimem vestibus instratum aureis."

thoughts may be better expressed in the latitude and freedom of original composition, than in a version where definite bounds are prescribed. I would add, that it is a work, on which no great labour was bestowed: since I dictated the whole in the space of a few days; principally as I took the exercise of walking. I am therefore so far from expecting any great credit from this version, that I shall think myself sufficiently fortunate, if I escape severe censure:—consequently I not only excuse, but almost interdict you, and the rest of my friends, from defending it: wishing to reserve your good offices, wholly for other publications which I have in view." (*s*)

This celebrated version is inscribed by Politian to Pope Innocent VIII. The epistle dedicatory may be found amongst his letters, and is prefixed to most of the ancient editions of the work. It may not be improper to subjoin

Lib. viii. ep. 1.

(*s*) This letter, which Politian concludes with some instructions to his friend, which shew how much he wished that the most minute exactness should be observed in the superintendance of the press, he dates, "e Rusculo Fæsulano prid. non. Maias," (i. e. May 6) 1493. The first edition of this work was compleated at Rome, die xx. Junii, 1493. For the colophon, &c. see "De Bure's Bibliograph. Instructive:" who mentions two other editions published at Bologna in the same year. (*Artic.* 4940 *et seqq. tom.* v.) Hence it becomes necessary to observe, that though the actual publication of Politian's translation of Herodian did not take place till some little time after the decease of Lorenzo de' Medici; it was, however, compleated and addressed to Innocent VIII. so early as A. D. 1487. That pontiff's letters to Politian and Lorenzo de' Medici, in commendation of this performance, bear date, *Die* xvi. *Augusti*, M.CCCCLXXXVII. in the third year of his pontificate.

a translation of it: especially as it contains allusions to some of the public events of these times.

Angelus Politianus to Innocent VIII. Pont. Max.

"When I was at Rome, about three years ago, in the retinue of the Florentine embassy which was sent to congratulate your Holiness, on your recent exaltation to the pontifical dignity, I recollect that on a public occasion, you honoured me with the charge of translating into the Latin tongue the transactions of Roman princes, if any records of them should be discovered among the remains of Grecian literature, with which our countrymen were yet unacquainted. Sensible that by your high mandate no less duty than honour was laid upon me, I began to consider with great solicitude, of which of the numerous Greek authors I should undertake a version. Herodian was among the first to occur to me; who so excellently details events:—had been himself so long conversant at court:—and when far advanced in years, undertook to compose a history of his own times: and who obtained the palm of eloquence, and wonderfully maintained the veracity and freedom of a historian. The work had been already compleated, without occasioning me much trouble; and I flatter myself, not "in despite of Minerva," when public disturbances intervened, to interrupt my studies, and in a measure banish that chearfulness of mind, which is a principal help to composition. But when, by your wisdom, you had restored to Italy the peace she

so much desired, and had formed a private alliance with my patron, Laurentius Medices, a person of exalted fortune, but of still more exalted genius and prudence:—the storm was, as it were, dispersed; and is succeeded by an universal calm. We are now permitted to breathe from our calamities; and like flowers lately surcharged with rain, and ready to shed their leaves, are enabled once more to erect our heads to the returning rays of a genial sun. I please myself with the thoughts of publishing what I have already written: and project further literary undertakings, which may redound to the honour of your name, and instruct or benefit the studious of our times. Condescend then graciously to accept our Herodian, as a prelude to other works, perhaps more worthy your high patronage. You will find in him, a variety of characters and transactions:—an agreeable novelty:—surprizing instances of the mutability of fortune:—unexpected events:—seasonable and weighty reflections:—a style at once harmonious and dignified. The work comprehends a copious source of moral instruction, and forms a kind of mirror of human life, by consulting which, mankind may derive information of great public as well as private utility. I have executed this translation to the best of my ability: and hope it will be found in all respects a faithful one; that it betrays nothing impertinent or adscititious, and that no Greek idioms, which have not been sanctioned by custom, detract from the purity of the style: that the Greek and Latin texts correspond in perspicuity, possessed of the same chasteness, and bearing the same character: and that

none of the expressions are harsh or overstrained. As you have already condescended, holy Father! to hold out to me from your exalted station the signal of hope; continue, I beseech you, to cherish, and confer splendour on learning and the useful arts; which suppliantly prostrate themselves at your sacred feet, imploring your protection against ignorance and barbarism. As you have given peace to Italy, and consequently to the world; let it be your pleasure to vindicate the sciences, which are fostered by the wings of peace, from insult and injury."

Innocentius VIII. to Angelus Politianus. Lib. viii. ep. 2.

"We received with great satisfaction the work you lately sent us, translated from the Greek into the Latin language: both on account of its novelty, and because it is, in the judgment of the learned about our person, so embellished by your erudition and genius, that it cannot fail of proving a valuable acquisition to our library. We return you our sincere thanks, and commend your diligence; exhorting you to persevere in labours of so praiseworthy a nature; which must tend to reflect the highest credit on yourself, and entitle you to more considerable proofs of our favour. At present, in token of our satisfaction, and paternal affection for you, we have resolved to transmit to you two hundred gold crowns, by our beloved son Joannes Tornabonus: to assist in placing you in those easy circumstances, which may enable you to devote your time wholly to studies of this nature."

Innocent's letter to Politian was accompanied by another to Lorenzo de' Medici, to the same effect. Of the version of Herodian, he says, "erit apud nos ut decet, in magno honore, bibliothecæ nostræ ornamentum, virtutis et doctrinæ illius testimonium." He exhorts Lorenzo to use his influence, to engage Politian in similar undertakings; and promises to reward his exertions by benefices and other means within his power: finally making mention of the two hundred gold crowns which he has already sent: "ne hic liber indonatus remaneret." Politian did not neglect to express his thanks to Innocent, by a second letter, wherein he extols his bounty, and infers that such a disposition to encourage literature, on the part of his Holiness, cannot fail to revive the spirits of men of learning, and excite their diligence: and he promises to redouble his own efforts, to produce something more worthy of so exalted a patron. (*t*) Nor was he wanting in the improvement of such occasions as presented themselves, of strengthening his interests at Rome: as may be discovered from his letters to several cardinals and bishops; the main object of which was to engage their good offices with the pon-

Lib. viii. ep. 3.

Lib. viii. ep. 4.

(*t*) From the conclusion of this letter it appears, that even at this season, — the commencement of the reign of good sense, extravagant adulation continued, on some occasions, to form a part of the etiquette of the day.

"Spero autem fore," says Politian, "quamdiu sub umbrâ tui Numinis recubuero, ità ab omnibus vel incommoditatibus quas vita humana fert, vel languoribus molestiisque exolvar, ut ab umbrâ Apostoli Petri, cujus tu locum in isto fastigio obtines, omni prorsùs ægritudine homines liberabantur."

tiff in his behalf, as opportunities might occur.

The "GREEK EPIGRAMS" of Politian were written, for the most part, when he was very young. He writes to one of his friends, to consult him on the propriety of publishing them:—observing, "that many flatter him it will conduce to the glory, not only of his country, but of the age itself, should a native of Italy be the occasion of interrupting the long slumbers of the Grecian Muse:—no poem in that language having appeared during the space of the last six hundred years, that deserved to be read." From the address to the reader, however, prefixed to the "Greek Epigrams," in the volume of Politian's works, they appear to have been published after the death of the author, from the original manuscript, by Zenobius Acciajolus; who acknowledges that he did not consider them, as "judicio auctoris ad æternitatem probata:" and some of them might have been suppressed, probably without injury to the literary, and certainly with advantage to the moral reputation of the author. Lib. ix. ep 9.

Joannes Lascaris indulged his spleen by ridiculing, in the following verses, Politian's practice of prefixing to his Greek epigrams the year of his age, in which they were composed.

ΠΑΙΣ ἀΐδοσχεδίως, ἑκκαιδεκαΐῳ δ' ἐνιαυΐῳ,
'ΑΓΓΕΛΕ, φῄς, ἔποιεν (θαυμα) τοιῇσδ' ἐλεγχῃς.
Θαυμα γαρ, ἀλλ' ἀναγνῳς Ἕλλας μοῦσ' ὁσσ' ἐμογησε
Γραμματα, παυΐας ὁμως τ' Αυσονιων ἀρῃς,
Θαυμ' ἀυ, πως, παιδων ἑκαΐον γαθιουσιν ἀριστος
Δακτυλον ἐ προεδῃς ἀνδρῶ ἐν ἡλικιῃ.

In Menagianis. tom. iv. p. 436, et seqq.

Menage, from whom Menckenius cites the above epigram, has given the following translation of it.

A Haute voix Sire Angelo publie
Qu' en langue Grecque il a fait, à seize ans,
Vers si très-beaux qu' ils charment l' Italie,
Et de la Grece étonnent les savans.
Le miracle est sans doute des plus grans;
Moindre, pourtant, que celui ci, je gage;
C'est qu' Angelo, qui dès seize ans a sû
Plus mille fois qu' on ne sait à tel age,
Ore à quarante, après avoir tout lû,
N'a de savoir pas un grain davantage.

Several of Politian's Greek epigrams will hereafter claim our attention, as they incidentally happen to throw light upon our enquiries. The two following, which are marked as the productions of his eighteenth year, will enable the reader to form an estimate of his success in this novel species of composition.

AD JOANNEM BAPTISTAM BONISIGNIUM.

ΗΔΗ τοι παρα μεν χειμων, παρα δ' αστειος ομβρος,
Αγρονομοι τ' εφυγον, μεσα δε πασα πολις.
Συ μονος αεναως πολαμυς και ουρεα φυλλα
Ποσσι περας απαλοις, συ μονος ανηρα νεμη;
Νυν μεν αρ' ωϊωενλα λαγων, νυν δ' αγριον αιγα
Εις τα λιν' εμβαλλων καρχαροδονλι κυνι.
Νυμφας τ' ιοφορους θελγων πολυδενδρεω υλη
Γλωτλης τ' ηδε λυρης αμβροϊον ασμα χεεις.
Δευρο, ΦΙΛΟΣ, μη φευγε φιλυς, και χαζεο καιρω,
Πικρα ανευγε φιλων εξι και αμβροσιη.

TO JOANNES BAPTISTA BONISIGNIUS.

From the Greek of Politian.

THE rains descend, the wintry blast blows keen,
See! all in haste desert the rural scene!
Teems the full city! you the mountain steep
Traverse alone, or stem the torrent's deep:
In dew-besprinkled grots, your toils prepare,
Or chace the chamois or the listening hare:
Or woo the nymphs with more than mortal song,
While rapt groves listen, and the strains prolong.—
But brave no more, my FRIEND, the inclement skies;
Rejoin our choir, and think of social joys:—
For say, to SOLITUDE what sweets can yield
The morning's fragrance, or the ambrosial field?

AD EUNDEM.

Εις Σοφιαν παρακλησις.

ΝΥΝ γε Νοΐος πίνει μελανοπτερος ἀσπετον ὄμβρον,
Ηδη και νιφαδας θρηξ Βορεας συναγει,
Φηγων και πτελεων εμαρανθη φυλλ' ἐπι γαιη,
Χειμα δε κερλομεον ὀυρεσι κειρε κομας.
Πευκαι ἀκαρποι εασσιν, ἀει θηλειης περ ἐωσαι,
Υψικομοι τ' ελαΐαι, και θαναΐοιο φυλον.
Αλλα και ὡς δαφνη τε και ποικιλον ερνος ἐλαιας
Φυλλων και καρπων χαιρωσι βριθοσυνη.
Παν'α γαρ ἀλλα χρονω κραΐεροι καΐεδωσιν ὀδονΐες:
Αφθαρτος δ' ἡμιν ἐστι μονον Σοφιη.

TO THE SAME.

See dreary Notus shakes his flagging wing
'Mid scowling skies,—while Boreas hastes to fling
His snowy influence round: the grove has shed
Its wither'd honours on the mountain's head:—
Even funeral cypress, and the sombre pine,
(Retain'd their verdure) now their fruits resign:
Yet still productive through the wintry scene
The olive blooms, and laurel ever green.
Wisdom! thy plants no blights of age consume,
Deathless they bud,—and breathe a rich perfume.

Of Politian's poetical translation of Homer, (*v*) which he is supposed to have com-

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(*v*) Mr. Roscoe has noticed the translation of Homer's "Batrachomyomachia" into Latin verse, by Carlo Aretino, published at Parma, 1492, and again at Florence, 1512. Mattaire, in his edition of the "Batrachomyomachia," Lond. 1721, 8vo. presents the reader with a copy of Aretino's version, in which the form and orthography of the ancient edition are preserved.

Landino has left an eulogium on Carlo Aretino, who succeeded Leonardo as secretary to the Florentine republic. Carlo is especially to be ranked among the poets of his day. The eulogy of Landino affords express testimony that he had begun a translation of the Iliad into Latin verse. But he does not appear to have gone through the first book, when his design was interrupted by death.

"Urbs tulit Arreti Carolum: Florentia lauro
Cinxit: at ingenium Calliopea dedit.
Luserat hic lyricos: mox dum convertit Homerum,
Occidit heu! patriæ gloria magna suæ."
Landini Poem. inter Carm. Illustr. Poet. Ital.

In addition to the translations of the Iliad into Latin verse enumerated by Mr. Roscoe, may be mentioned that of Eo-

pleated, but of which no part is at present known to remain, frequent mention occurs in his writings, and in those of his learned correspondents. The loss of so interesting a production is indeed greatly to be regretted. "Politian," says Aldus Manutius, "lived not to superintend the publication of his own works. This office devolved upon his friends, and particularly upon Alexander Sartius, of Bologna, a person who ranks highly in the estimation of the learned. Any thing which may appear in them exceptionable or erroneous, he would doubtless have corrected had he lived some time longer. Had he indeed attained to the usual extent of human existence, those now presented to the public would have formed a small part only of his literary labours. He would have restored the true readings of the PANDECTS, or code of civil law brought from Pisa. He would have illustrated them by his classic pen, with learned commentaries. He had very successfully begun to free philosophy from the jargon of barbarism. He had pledged himself, within the space of ten years, to illustrate by his pen, or from the chair, the

Vide Ficini, Ep. Lib. i. p. 603, Par. 1641, in fol.

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banus Hessus, whose birth Baillet fixes in 1488, and his death in 1540. In a volume entitled "Belli Trojani Scriptores præcipui," 8vo. Bas. 1573, a poetical Latin version of the Iliad occurs:—of which the first, second, and ninth books, are given to Vincentius Obsopæus: the third, fourth, and fifth to Nicolaus Valla: the sixth, seventh, and eighth to Eobanus Hessus: the rest are anonymous. The same volume contains the poem of our own Josephus Iscanus, or Joseph of Exeter, "de Bello Trojano,"—but it is there falsely ascribed to Cornelius Nepos. Some account of this very early English writer of Latin verse may be found in *Lord Littleton's Life of Henry II.* See also *Leland, Camden,* and the *Anti-Baillet* of *Menage.*

whole circle of liberal sciences. O premature fate of a scholar, whose loss is ever to be regretted. Cruel death! who art least sparing of the highest and most transcendent talents! —Of what lights, of how much valuable information hast thou deprived posterity. Would I were in possession of the second century of Miscellanies; of the Epiphyllidæ of this author; of his ingenious and learned annotations on Suetonius, Terence, Statius, Quintilian, and of the rest of his numerous works; from which he might have compiled a century of centuries: how gladly would I publish them for the benefit of the studious. But these, I am informed, certain persons keep diligently concealed at Florence, intending to impose them upon the world as their own. Vain project!—the consequence of which will be, that if they should ever themselves produce any thing worthy of notice, the learned will place it to Politian's account:—since they are not ashamed to suppress his works, that they may adorn themselves with borrowed plumage."

Aldus Manutius in Epist. Nuncup. ad Marinum Sanutum, operibus Politiani præfixâ.

Some of the observations of Politian upon the works of classic authors, which Aldus considered as lost, have been since brought to light. Robert Stevens availed himself, with great advantage, of a printed copy containing marginal corrections by the hand of Politian, in his edition of Cato, Varro, and Columella, published, *Parisiis*, A. D. 1543. Many similar specimens of his critical skill are shewn by the ingenious Mr. Roscoe to be still existing in the different libraries of Italy; and Bandini, who had the good fortune to discover his collations on the Pandects of Justinian, in the Laurentian library at Florence, has recently

Life of Lorenzo de' Medici. vol. ii. p. 70.

published a particular memoir upon that subject. These fruits of Politian's learned labour, together with those that have already occupied our attention, and the less voluminous pieces (*w*) contained in the volume of his works are honourable and lasting monuments of his erudition. But his confidence

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(*w*) The "Opuscula" of Politian are, 1. "Historia Conjurationis Pactianæ." In this history of the conspiracy of the *Pazzi*, critics have generally agreed that the author has evinced himself a very successful imitator of Sallust. Though so much commended by many, it is however censured by Joan. Mich. Brutus, *Hist. Florentinæ*, *Lib.* vi. *p.* 313. It occurs in none of the ancient collections of Politian's works, except that printed by Episcopius, *Basil.* 1553, *in folio*. Mr. Roscoe has given it in the appendix to his "*Life of Lor. de' Med.*" *vol.* i. *Append. No.* xxi.

2. "Epicteti Enchiridion è Græco Interpretatum." When this was finished, Menckenius is at a loss to conjecture: he probably overlooked an entertaining letter of Picus to Politian, concerning this version, and which proves it to be one of its author's earlier productions. (*Vide Lib.* i. *Epist. Pol. ep.* 5.) A letter in defence of the philosophy of Epictetus, addressed to Bart. Scala, and subjoined to the version in question, is dated from Fesulæ, 1479.

3. A translation of the "Problemata of Alexander Aphrodiseas."

4. "Plutarchi Narrationes Amatoriæ in Lat. versæ."

5. "Prælectio cui titulus "Lamia." The introductory part of this forms an amusing satire upon certain calumniators of Politian, who were offended by his having undertaken to handle philosophical subjects.

6. "Prælectio," cui titulus, "Panepistemon."

7. "Quod Ira in pueris optimæ sæpè indolis est Argumentum."

9. "Oratio in expositione Homeri." Thomasius, (*in Dissert. de Plagio Literario*) with others, confidently accuses Politian of having purloined the remarks contained in this oration from "Plutarchi de Vitâ et Poesi Homeri Libellus." Menckenius asserts, that notwithstanding the above charge has been so currently related by various successive authors, the writers of the Diary, entitled "Histoire Critique de la Republique des Lettres," and the Commentator of Rabe-

in his own powers seems to have been unbounded; and his mind, full of ambition, and inflamed with an ardent thirst for literary glory.—"I have ever been actuated," says he, "perhaps without just grounds; but I have ever been actuated by a desire of producing something that may immortalize me. Riches, preferments, power, and pleasure, are trifles in my estimation, compared with a name and reputation, which shall survive to the latest posterity." Lib. xii. ep. 6.

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lais declare, that upon a diligent collation of Politian's Oration with the work of Plutarch, they are convinced that the charge is unjust and groundless. This piece of scandal is traced by Menckenius, to Janus Lascaris, the rival and literary enemy of Politian. *(Vit. Pol. p. 420.)*

9. "Oratio super F. Quintiliano; et Statii Sylvis."

10. "Præfatio in Suetonii Expositionem."

11. "Oratio pro Oratoribus Senensium ad Alexandr. VI. Pontif. Max." This was addressed to the pontiff on his accession to the papal throne, A. D. 1492. But Bartholomæus Sothinus, the speaker, through diffidence, or some other cause, is said to have lost himself in the recital, and to have been obliged to desist abruptly in the middle of the address. *(Vide Mencken. ut supra.)*

12. "Pro Oratoribus Florentinorum ad Alphonsum Siciliæ Regem Orationes ii."

13. "Pro Prætore Florentinorum Oratio."

14. "Athanasii in Psalmos Opusculum; Politiano Interprete."

15. "Dialectica, et De Dialecticâ Prælectio."

16. "Præfatio in Persium."

With regard to his labours on the "Pandects of Justinian," "Grand' onore," (says Foscarini) "e' dovuto al Poliziano, che fu il primo ad illuminare molte oscure parti dell' erudizione Legale, e, per consequenza, ragunò materia a coloro che poscia vi s' internarono di Proposito, cosi partecipò della stessa laude il grande amico di lui Ermolao Barbaro, il quale possedendo appieno la scienza delle leggi conobbe pure il bisogno di accompagnarle colla notizia degli usi Romani." *(Foscarini Della Letteratura Veneziana, p. 74.)*

Far therefore from resting satisfied with what he had already atchieved in the *arena* of literature; he considered his past works merely as preludes to others of greater magnitude. The letters he addressed to Matteo Corvino, (*x*) king of Hungary; and Don Ju-

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(*x*) Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, was equally distinguished for his military talents and his love of letters. During a reign of thirty-six years he was constantly occupied with some new war. The Poles, Germans, Wallachians, and Turks alternately experienced his victorious prowess. He carried his arms into Silesia, and enlarged by his conquests the boundaries of his dominions. He expelled the Turks, who had seized upon Otranto, from the footing they had gained in Italy. Whilst his warlike achievements thus corresponded in brilliancy with those of the celebrated general Joannes Corvinus Hunniades, his father, it was his greater glory to evince himself a distinguished patron of the fine arts, and of elegant and useful letters. He was himself a prince of considerable erudition, well versed in the writings of the ancient historians, from whom he derived many of his military maxims, and a great portion of his skill in the art of war. Like Lorenzo de' Medici,—between whom and himself intervened a most amicable interchange of friendly offices, particularly with regard to literary affairs, he allured to his capital, by great encouragements, persons eminent for their learning, or skill in the fine arts, from all countries: "quorum consuetudine," says Paulus Jovius, *(in Elogiis)* "legendo et disputando mirum in modum oblectabatur. Quicquid enim otii e gravissimis occupationibus suffurari potuit, id totum evolvendis annalibus impendebat; multusque versabatur in eâ bibliothecâ quam exquisitis libris, nullo deterrente sumptu, refertissimam esse curaverat. Forum verò Budæ præcellentium artificum tabernis exornârat, qui, ex Italiâ præsertìm, certis invitati præmiis Budam confluebant. Regia enim Budæ veræ Virtutis domicilium, perpetuique splendoris hospitale diversorium cunctis gentibus patebat: QUANDOQUIDEM VINCERE HOSTES ET SCRIBENDA FACERE ET VIRTUTEM LIBERALITER EXORNARE REGIÆ FORTUNÆ PROPRIUM MUNUS ESSE DUCERET. Invexerat toti provinciæ Italicas artes, cultum domesticum; Hunnicæ gentis mores, ad arma et latrocinia natæ, ità molliverat, ut REGNUM EX PLUMBEO AUREUM,

an, king of Portugal; may be adduced as testimonies of the truth of this remark. To

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detersâque rubigine, splendidum reddidisse Pannonii fatentur."

Warton in his "Hist. of Eng. Poetry," (*vol.* ii. *p.* 417.) has the following remarks applicable to our present subject: "Even Hungary, a country by no means uniformly advanced with other parts of Europe in the common arts of civilization, was (at this period) illuminated with the distant dawning of science. Matteo Corvino, king of Hungary and Bohemia, in the fifteenth century, and who died in 1490, was a lover and a guardian of literature. He purchased innumerable volumes of Greek and Hebrew writers, at Constantinople and other Grecian cities, when they were sacked by the Turks: and as the operations of typography were now but imperfect, employed at Florence many learned librarians to multiply copies of classics, both Greek and Latin, which he could not procure in Greece. These, to the number of fifty thousand, he placed in a tower which he had erected in the metropolis of Buda; and in this library he established thirty amanuenses skilled in printing, illuminating, and writing; who under the conduct of Felix Ragusinus, a Dalmatian, consummately learned in the Greek, Chaldaic, and Arabic languages, and an elegant designer and painter of ornaments on vellum, attended incessantly to the business of transcription and decoration." Warton proceeds to observe, that the librarian was Bartholomeus Fontius; but in this, his information is not correct, if credit may be given to the Padre Ireneo Affò, who in his "Memorie di Taddeo Ugoleto of Parma," printed at Parma, 1781, in 4to. proves that this office was filled by Ugoleto: of whom see honourable mention, "*in Miscellaneis Politiani, cap.* v. *p.* 23.

The fate of this splendid library of king Matthias must fill every lover of literature with regret. "When Buda," continues Warton, *(ut supra)* "was taken by the Turks, in the year 1526, Cardinal Bozmanni offered for the redemption of this inestimable collection, 200,000 pieces of the Imperial money;—yet without effect: for the barbarous besiegers defaced or destroyed most of the books in the violence of seizing the splendid covers, and the silver bosses and clasps with which they were enriched." The learned Obsopæus relates, that a book was brought him by an Hungarian soldier, which he had picked up, with many others, in the pillage of king Corvino's library, and had preserved as a

the former, after extolling his magnificence, and the splendid actions which had distin- Lib. ix. ep. 1.

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prize, merely because the covering retained some marks of gold and rich workmanship. This proved to be a manuscript of the Ethiopics of Heliodorus; from which, in the year 1534, Obsopæus printed at Basil the first edition of that elegant romance."

The "Laudes Bellicæ Matthiæ Corvini, Hungariæ Regis," were celebrated in Latin verse, by Alexander Cortesius, one of Politian's pupils, but with powers unequal to those of his master. *(Vide Carmina Illustrium Poetarum Italorum, tom.* iii. *p.* 157, *et seqq.* 8vo. *Flor.* 1719.*)* To record the "Jocosè et Sapienter Dicta," and the "Egregiè Facta" of this monarch, fell to the lot of Galeottus Martius, whose history stands connected with that of other scholars of this age, and is briefly as follows. He was a native of Narnia, and for some time a professor of humanity at Bologna. He afterwards taught in private schools in Hungary. He informs us that he visited the baths of Baden through a desire to see the person of Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, and to solicit from his royal bounty marriage-portions for his daughters. Matthias admitted him to his intimate friendship, made him his secretary, and preceptor to his son, Joannes. He also attended the king in his warlike expeditions, in a military capacity. He experienced the attacks of Philelphus, but had a more serious antagonist in Merula. "About the year 1468, Galeottus wrote his treatise "De Homine;" in the first book of which he describes the exterior, in the second, the interior parts of man. This work Merula attacked with great bitterness, and with a considerable display of critical sagacity and learning. The commentary of Merula was printed without date or place, and inscribed to Lorenzo and Juliano de' Medici; perhaps about 1472. (See *Roscoe's Life of Lor. de' Med. vol.* ii. *p.* 75.)

Jovius says that Galeottus replied to the attack of Merula with such spirit, that his apologetic surpassed, in variety of learning, the original work. But the ecclesiastical critics, sitting in inquisition on his treatise, charged some opinions contained in it with a defect of orthodoxy; and these he was obliged publicly to retract. Being led forth to the *Geminæ Columnæ*, in the market-place of Venice, the place appointed for the confession and recantation of his errors, Galeottus had the address to alleviate the disagreeableness of his situation, by transferring the attention and ridicule of

tinguished his reign: and testifying his own desire, to employ those talents which nature had given him in celebrating them: he thus proceeds: "Who am I, or what degree of eminence I possess among the learned, modesty induces me to wish your majesty should learn from the information of others, rather than from myself. Suffice it to say, that by the kindness and liberality of Lorenzo de' Medici, a person distinguished for his superlative talents, and among the warmest admirers of your virtues, I have been raised from an obscure birth, and humble fortune, to the degree of rank and distinction I now enjoy; without any other recommendation than my literary qualifications. I have for a series of

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the populace to another object. "Nam cum fortè non ignobilis Venetus, è turbâ proximus strigosâ proceritate, et impudicæ uxoris probro insignis, traductum ludibrio *præpinguem porcum* appellâsset, extemplò Galeottus, renidentique ore, "*pinguis*," ait, "*porcus, quam macer hircus esse malo.*" Erat enim Galeottus usque adeò tumenti abdomine, ut quum sub vasto obesi corporis pondere, vel prægrandia jumenta fatiscerent, rhedâ curuli veheretur." *(Vide Jovii Elogia.)* That his punishment was not more severe, is attributed to the protection afforded him by Pope Sixtus, who had once been in the number of his pupils; and his holiness did not escape the secret censures of the inquisitors for this his clemency to a heretic.

Galeottus had gone into France, upon the invitation of Louis XI. and was proceeding to Lyons where the court then was, when he unexpectedly met the king at a small distance from the city. Through the trepidation and hurry of his zeal to pay his respects to the monarch, and his extreme corpulency, he fell in attempting to descend from his horse; and died in consequence of his fall, in 1478. *(Vide Noveau Dictionnaire Historique; Jovii Elogia et Galeotti Libellum de egregiè, sapientèr, jocosè dictis et factis Matthiæ Sereniss. Hungariæ Regis, &c.* which is printed among the *Rerum Hungaric. Scriptores. Francof.* 1600, *in folio.)*

years, publicly taught at Florence, not only the Latin language with universal applause, but likewise the Greek, with a reputation equal to that of the natives of Greece; which I may venture to affirm, has been the case with no other of the Italians, for a thousand years past. My pen has been employed on a variety of subjects; and, if I may be permitted the mention of a fact generally known, has procured me the commendations of almost all the learned of the age. Thus, presuming on your royal indulgence, I venture to state my pretensions, with a frankness that is unusual, and may possibly subject me to censure; but nevertheless with that truth, which alone can apologize for my freedom. If this tender of my services meet with acceptance, I shall be proud to exert what abilities I possess, in any way your wisdom may condescend to prescribe: and with a zeal, which I flatter myself, may entitle me to your royal favour. Deign then to put my obedience to the test, by honouring me with your commands: or at least condescend to admit of my voluntary exertions, on such topics as my own fancy may deem most agreeable to you. Your majesty is at present engaged in founding a library, at once magnificent, and richly furnished with books: I can, as occasion may require, employ my pen in translations from the Greek language into the Latin: or in original compositions, which may not prove unworthy the attention of men of letters. You are erecting a palace of unequalled grandeur: and adorning your capital with statues of brass and marble. The most eminent artists are continually engaged in supplying you

with exquisite paintings, and other works of art. These, the Muse of Politian can celebrate, if it be your royal pleasure, in numbers not unworthy of such subjects. He flatters himself he is not unskilled in the art of transmitting to future ages, the events of your majesty's reign, in war or peace, by the well-connected page of history: and in the language of Greece or Rome; in the flowing periods of prose; or the sublime diction of immortal song; of recording your praise to the latest posterity."

Lib. x. ep. 1. His letter to the king of Portugal, is composed of similar materials: praise of that monarch; and a display of his own powers. He requests to be appointed his historiographer: and to be favoured with a transcript of the annals of his reign; composed in any language, and without regard to accuracy of style: to serve merely as a basis for his own intended work. On this, he promises to erect such a superstructure, as shall be able to withstand the vicissitudes of fortune, and the waste of ages. The offer of Politian was accepted; and the Portuguese monarch in his answer, (*y*) engages to furnish him with the Lib. x. ep. 2. requisite documents as soon as possible.

(*y*) John II. king of Portugal, born May 3, 1455; succeeded his father Alphonso V. in 1481. The brilliancy of his military exploits acquired him the appellation of the "Great;" and the rigid impartiality with which he caused justice to be administered, procured him the further title of the "Perfect," or as others say, the "Severe." Eager to extend his empire to regions hitherto unexplored, he fitted out fleets of discovery; and these enterprizes were crowned with signal success: so that under his auspices, various Portuguese colonies were founded on distant shores. In his

Politian could not, however, escape the censures of perverse or invidious critics. (*z*) By some he was accused of plagiarism. Others, while they were constrained to acknowledge his erudition, found fault with his style; and termed him a "mere *solderer* of obsolete words." (*a*) To the latter charge, Politian

Lib. iii. ep. 14.

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letter to Politian, he is styled "Joannes Dei Gratiâ Rex Portugalliæ et Algarbiorum citra et ultra mare in Africa, Dominusque Guineæ."

It is recorded of this prince, that he one day said to an indolent and avaricious judge, "I know that you keep your hands open, and your doors shut: look well to yourself." Having been deprived by death of his only son, whom he tenderly loved, "It is my consolation," said he, "that heaven, in depriving me of him, evinces its care for the happiness of my people; since he was not qualified to govern." The young prince had, it seems, been too much addicted to gallantry and dissipation. This monarch died October 25, 1495, aged 41.

It was in allusion to John II. says Manuel de Faria y Sousa, the Portuguese historian, that one of our own countrymen told Henry VII. "the most extraordinary sight he had seen in Portugal, was, a prince who governed every body, and whom nobody governed." He never suffered either minister or favourite to gain the ascendancy over him. He was a wise prince; and such consideration had he for his subjects, that when it was proposed to him to lay any new burthen upon them, "let us see first," he would say, "whether it be necessary to raise money:" and this point ascertained; "now," would the good monarch continue, "let us see what are our superfluous expences." *(Vide Noveau Dict. Histor. Manuel de Faria y Sousa, Historia del Reyno de Portugal. En Amberes,* 1730, *in fol. &c.*

(*z*) See his controversy with Merula. *(Inter Epist. Politiani.)*

(*a*) "Et tu mihi, superioribus diebus apertè dixisti: et abs te auditum multi retulerunt: non placere genus scribendi meum: propterea quod ascita nimium verba et remota consector. Me quoque esse quendam, sic enim soletis dicere FERRUMINATOREM: vox enim hæc apud te significare

answers in general, "I have never ventured to introduce into my compositions any terms"

"Cinctutis non exaudita Cethegis:"

"nor do I follow any, but the best authorities. But I am not one of those, who would suffer the Latin language to sink, in a great measure, into oblivion, through a silly fear of employing any word, or form of expression, which has not hitherto been in general use." To Bartholemæus Scala (*b*) in particular, he replies: "Si quæ cuique obvia sint, ea tantùm noster sermo recipiat: nullâ magis quam tabellionum linguâ utemur:" alluding sarcastically to Scala's office of secretary to the republic.

Lib. iii. ep. 15.

Lib. v. ep. 1.

The inquisitive reader will be much gratified with the perusal of the original letters of these learned disputants: and not less with those of a more friendly description, which passed between Politian, and Paulus Cortesius. Politian, on this occasion, expresses his dislike of servile imitation, and asserts his own claim to the merit of originality, in terms to the following effect. "I hear you approve

Lib. viii. ep. 16.

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jamdiu cœpit eum, qui verbis istis paulò minùs vulgatis uteretur." *(Epist. Pol. Bart. Scalæ. Lib.* v. *ep.* 2.*)*

(*b*) The letters that passed between Politian and Bartholemæus Scala, are replete with wit, and with invective. For an outline of this controversy, as well as of that which took place between Politian and Merula, the reader is referred to Mr. Roscoe's "Life of Lorenzo de' Medici." Politian's controversy with Merula was interrupted by the death of the latter. In allusion to this event, Politian in one of his letters thus expresses himself. "Perierat Merula, nisi periisset." *(Lib.* vi. *ep.* 3.*)*

of no style of composition, the language and periods of which are not perfectly Ciceronian : (nisi qui liniamenta Ciceronis effingat.) For my own part, I find the countenance of a bull, or a lion, infinitely less contemptible than that of an ape : though the latter has more resemblance of the human species. Even of those authors who rank highest for eloquence, each has a style peculiar to himself, as Seneca remarks. Quintilian indulges a very just pleasantry, at the expence of certain persons, who fancied themselves nearly related to Cicero, because they had contrived to round a period with the words, "esse videatur." You know how Horace exclaims against the servile herd of imitators. In my estimation, they resemble parrots, or daws, that are taught to articulate words, of which they know not the meaning. The compositions of such persons, are without animation, or energy : and display neither feeling nor genius : they are replete with dulness and insipidity : as void of meaning as they are destitute of true taste. "Your style is not that of Cicero," it may be said.— "Perhaps not ; nor am I Cicero :—but I apprehend my style is my own."

It is, however, worthy of remark, that in opposition to what Paulus Jovius terms the harsh and unclassical diction of the scholars of this age, resulting from the pride of originality, Naugerius, Bembus, and many of their contemporaries, in succeeding times, were not ashamed to class themselves amongst the imitators of Cicero, in their prose writings : a master, adds Jovius, whom Politian and Hermolaus Barbarus contemned : while conscious of the extent of their own erudition

and powers, they thought it more honourable to form a style of their own, than to cramp and fetter their genius by servile imitation. Indeed, adds he, their opinion was, that the real lineaments and character of genius can never be justly expressed in the language of another. "Magno tunc quidem probro erat doctis, ridendis pares simiis videri:" To be charged with assuming the ridiculous character of apes, the learned of those days dreaded as the greatest disgrace.

That Politian had occasionally, (*c*) ecclesiastical duties of an active nature to discharge, appears from his own account. He accuses himself of a natural propensity to indolence. He also laments the misapplication of much of his time, which he was compelled to bestow on trifles: and in satisfying the petty requests of the impertinent and obtrusive. "Does any want a motto for the hilt of his sword: or a posy for a ring: a memento

Lib. ii. ep. 2.

Ibid.

(*c*) Politian's being said to have boasted, that he never read the scriptures but once, is a calumny refuted by the express testimony of *Politian himself*, in one of his letters, "sese quadragesimali tempore publicè populo sacras literas enarrasse"—a remark from Vigneul Marville. See *Jortin's notes to the Life of Erasmus, vol.* i. *p.* 82. Politian's words are, "Cum per hos quadragesimæ proximos dies enarrandis populo sacris literis essem occupatus." *(Lib.* iv. *ep.* 10.*)* He also translated "S. Athanasii in Psalmos Opusculum." *(Vide oper. ejus.)* Baillet seems hastily to rank him among the advocates of infidelity, upon the authority of vague and ill-founded reports. *(Prejuges des Auteurs, et alibi.)* Who will lightly credit the story, that the intimate friend and associate of Joannes Picus of Mirandula, was an infidel, or hostile to the study of the scriptures?

for his bed-chamber: (*d*) or a device for his silver vessels, or even his earthen-ware:—all run to Politian: so that there is scarcely a wall, which I have not, like a snail, besmeared with the effusions of my brain. One teazes me for catches and glees for a bacchanalian party: another, for a grave discourse, adapted to some particular solemnity: a third, wants a lamentable ditty for a serenade: and a fourth a licentious ballad for a carnival. This fool tells me his love-perplexities, which I sit like a fool to hear. Another wishes for a symbol, which, while it is perfectly intelligible to his mistress, may serve only to perplex the curiosity of others. (*e*) I pass by the unseasonable garrulity of pedants: the impertinences of *poetasters*, who are in the constant habit of admiring their own productions. These are the plagues I am daily compelled to endure:

(*d*) Politian's motto for his own bed-chamber, is preserved among his poems.

In poste cubiculi sui

Blanda quies habitet—duri procul este labores.

He composed the following for *Julius Salviatus.*

Pectoris interpres—genii domus—hospita curis,
Cellula sum domini conscia deliciis.
Hic faciet te Juno patrem, Cytherea maritum,
Libertas regem, semideumque Sopor.

(*e*) "Given eare-rings we will weare,
Bracelets of our lovers haire,
Which they on our armes shall twist,
With their names carv'd on our wrist.
All the money that wee owe,
Wee in tokens will bestow;
And learne to write, that when 'tis sent,
Onely our loves know what is meant."

Cupid's Revenge by Beaumont and Fletcher, old 4to. *edition.*

besides the interruptions I meet with, in my walks abroad, from the lower class of the inhabitants of this city, and its vicinity: who drag me through the streets, on their concerns, *like an ox by the nose.*"

If we may credit Politian's account of himself, it at least evinces good nature and urbanity of temper, on his part; ill according with those stories, which charge him with a peevishness of disposition, (*f*) that corresponded with his personal deformities. The internal evidence of his letters tends to prove, that he was naturally inclined to facetiousness and pleasantry: and capable of malignant irascibility, only when his literary talents and reputation were called in question. A vein of humour pervades the greater part of his epistolary correspondence: and it seems improbable that he would chuse to assume a character, in his familiar writings, which his personal behaviour did not in some measure support.

Still more serious charges have been alledged against the purity of his morals: but

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(*f*) "Distortis erat moribus: facie nequaquam ingenuâ et liberali: cum naso enormi, et oculo sublustro. (*Pauli Freheri Theatrum ex Elogiis Pauli Jovii desumpt. Vide etiam Elogia P. Jovii.*

Politian admits the charge of deformity with regard to his person in the Hendecasyllables, entitled, "in Mabilium Responsum:" but makes an ingenious, though not very delicate use of these defects to confound his literary opponent.

> "Quòd nasum mihi, quòd reflexa colla
> Demens objicis: esse utrumque nostrum
> Assertor veniam vel ipse; nam me
> Nil nasutius est sagaciusve,
> In te dum liceat vibrare nasum, &c."

these are, for the most part, allowed to rest on the very questionable authority of Paulus Jovius: of whom it is said, that prejudice, resentment, or interest generally guided his pen. Politian has found able advocates in Pierius Valerianus, Barthius, and Mr. Roscoe. It must be acknowledged that the youthful muse of Politian, did not always adhere to the strictness of decorum: a fault too common amongst the poetical writers of his age. A few of his Greek epigrams, as well as of his Latin verses, are very exceptionable. In one of his letters to Picus of Mirandula, he says, "Audio te versiculos amatorios quos olim scripseras combussisse, veritum fortasse ne vel tuo jam nomini, vel aliorum moribus officerent." It had been well, if not only Politian, but Pontanus, Sannazarius, and others, had by similar sacrifices, testified an equal solicitude for their own characters, and the morals of posterity.

De infelicitate Litteratorum. Adversariorum. lib. xlvii. cap. 17. and Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medici.

Lib. i. ep. 7.

Lib. i. ep. 7.

The LETTERS so frequently referred to in the preceding pages, and which greatly contribute to illustrate the life and literary labours of Politian, yet remain to be more particularly noticed. They were collected, and arranged for the press by Politian himself, a very short time before his death, at the particular request of Piero, the son and successor of Lorenzo: as we learn from that which serves as proem and dedication.

Angelus Politianus to Petrus Medices. Lib. i. ep. 1.

"You, my noble friend, have frequently urged me to collect my letters and arrange

them for publication. This I have now done, willing to evince my entire obedience to him in whom all my fortunes and my hopes are centered. Not that I pretend to have collected all: it would be an easier task to gather the scattered leaves of the Sybil. Far indeed, from being composed with a view to such an arrangement, they were merely occasional productions, on topics not sought after, or studied, but presented by accident: consequently I preserved copies of a part only; those perhaps least worth preserving: and even they have long been contending with dust and insects. To complete the volume therefore, I have inserted some letters with which I have been favoured by my friends; selecting those of men of learning only: and hope they may serve to compensate for the dulness and insipidity of my own.

I acknowledge the style of my letters is very unequal; for which I expect not to escape reprehension. But let it be remembered that the writer was not always in the same humour; and that one mode of writing is by no means suited to every person, and every subject. On perusing letters so dissimilar, (should any person think them worth perusal) it will probably be said that Politian has again been writing "Miscellanies," and not letters. However, among so many discordant opinions of those who write, or who give rules for writing letters, I do not despair of finding an apology. One will say, for instance, "these letters are very unlike Cicero's." I shall answer, not without good authority, that Cicero is not to be regarded as a proper model in epistolary composition.

Another will pronounce me the mere echo of Cicero. To him I shall reply,—that I feel myself highly gratified in being deemed able to express even a faint resemblance of such an original. A third could wish I had adopted the manner of Pliny the orator, whose taste and judgment are so highly spoken of.—My answer will be, I entertain a thorough contempt for all the writers of Pliny's age. Does my style, in the opinion of a fourth, savour strongly of that very author? I shelter myself under the authority of Sidonius Apollinaris, an authority by no means to be contemned, who assigns to Pliny the palm in letter-writing. Is it discovered that I resemble Symmachus? I blush not to imitate one whose brevity and frankness are admired. Am I thought unlike him? It is because I object to his dryness. Some of my letters will perhaps be pronounced too long. Plato wrote long letters: so did Aristotle, Thucydides, Cicero. Others, on the contrary, are too short. Here I shall plead the examples of Dion, Brutus, Apollonius, Marcus Antoninus, Philostratus, Alciphron, Julian, Libanius, Symmachus: and moreover of Lucian, who is commonly, but falsely supposed to have been Phalaris. I may perhaps be censured for the choice of subjects ill adapted to an epistolary style.—I plead guilty to the charge, provided Seneca be included. Is my short, sententious manner disapproved of?—I shall appeal again to Seneca. Am I not sufficiently abrupt and sententious?—Let Dionysius speak for me, who argues for a looser form in epistolary composition. Is my diction too plain? —Philostratus recommends plainness. Is it

thought too obscure?—Cicero is obscure in his letters to Atticus. Is it found negligent? —A graceful negligence is the most pleasing ornament of a letter But it is too exact.— How then! on letters which are designed as presents to our friends,—is it possible that too much care and pains can be bestowed! Is there an appearance of too great nicety of arrangement? —I shall be vindicated by the Halicarnassian. No arrangement at all?— Artemon must defend me.

As the Latin language has moreover what may be termed its "atticisms;" if my language is deemed not sufficiently attic — so much the better: for what was Herod the sophist censured? — but that being born an Athenian, he affected to shew it too much by his language.—But do I "atticise" too much?—Let me urge the example of Theophrastus; in whom, though no Athenian, an old woman could detect this foible. In fine, is my manner thought too serious?—I am pleased with gravity: not grave enough?—I love to indulge in sportive flights of fancy. Is my language too figurative?—As letters approach very nearly to conversation, figures are to them, what graceful action is to the latter. Is it destitute of figures?—This want of figures is precisely what characterizes a letter. Does the letter betray the genius or character of the writer?—This openness is recommended. Does it conceal them?—It is because a composition of this nature should be without ostentation. Has the whole an appearance of roundness in its finishing?—This is the Grecian manner. Is it without that kind of polish?—Philostratus would have it

so. Loose and unconnected?—Aquila approves this. Has it measure and nerve?——Quintilian professes himself pleased. Is it not sufficiently dramatic?—A letter is not a dialogue. Too dramatic?—It is in its nature as nearly allied to dialogue as possible. But you express yourself, on common topics in common terms, and on new topics in new terms.—Then my language is exactly adapted to the subject. Nay,—but you express new ideas in common terms, and common ideas in new.—Very right, it is because I am mindful of the old Greek proverb that precisely recommends this.

Thus I hope still to provide myself with a subterfuge against the malice of critics. But to their censures I am comparatively indifferent: secure as I am of your approbation, for my letters, if good ones;—if otherwise, for my obedience. *Adieu.*"

The numerous CORRESPONDENTS of Politian form a constellation of learned men, whose histories, as intimately connected with that of the revival of letters, are deserving of more minute research than has, perhaps, hitherto been bestowed upon them. Many of these, as well as other scholars of the age, occur under disguised or academical appellations. At the revival of letters, the enthusiastic attachment excited in the breasts of scholars, to the ancients and their productions, was carried to such an excess, that to assume their names was considered, in some measure, as a means of increasing that emulation which was necessary to the acquisition of a portion of their genius and spirit. Hence originated

academical associations of a new kind, which had their commencement in the pontificate of Paul II at Rome; (unless it is rather to be referred to the institution of Alfonso I king of Naples, over which Antonius Panormita, and afterwards, Jovianus Pontanus presided) and were from thence extended to other cities of Italy. These academicians are said to have pleaded the example of some of the Monastics, each of whom at the gate of the cloister, renounced the name by which he had been distinguished in the world, for that of some saint of the church, whom he intended to make the particular object of his imitation! This practice of assuming classical appellations, was not, as M. Baillet observes, entirely discontinued by these learned societies, till after the pontificate of Clement VII. when the Italian academicians began to adopt distinctions of a different, and more modern complexion.

One of the earliest academies that affected these classical distinctions, instituted at Rome, as was before observed, probably had its ordinary and extraordinary members: who, according to Vossius, caused the following words to be inscribed on the house set apart for their reception:

"POMPONII LÆTI ET SODALITATIS ESCVLINAI."

An interesting letter of Pomponius (*g*) to Politian, characteristic of the manners and studies of the former, may not, perhaps, appear unworthy of a place in this volume.

(*g*) POMPONIUS LÆTUS was born in 1425, at Amendarola, a small town of upper Calabria; whence he is called by Baillet, Peter of Calabria; but M. de la Monnoye says

Pomponius Lætus to Angelus Politianus.

"It is time, most learned and ingenious of the Italians, that you should fulfil your promise of returning my Lucretius. Permit

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his real christian name was Julius. He was the illegitimate son of a prince of Salerno, of the house of Sanseverino. Though even under these circumstances, his birth would have reflected on him no disgrace; yet he was of a temper so singular, that he always strove to conceal his origin. He is said to have repressed the importunities of his friends, who solicited him to acknowledge and associate with them, by the following laconic epistle: "Pomponius Lætus, cognatis et propinquis suis. Quod petitis fieri non potest. valete."

He studied at Rome, under Laurentius Valla, who dying A. D. 1457, Pomponius was by common consent appointed his successor. Some years after this, being accused as one of the leaders of a pretended conspiracy of literary men, against Paul II.; he was pursued by order of the Pope to Venice whither he had retired, brought back to Rome in chains, and there thrown into prison, with other men of learning, amongst whom was Platina, who relates the transaction in his life of Paul II. He was at length liberated, and permitted to resume his chair of professor, which he occupied till his death. This happened in the pontificate of Alexander VI. previously to the year 1500.

Such, it is said, was his enthusiastic predilection for antiquity, that he greatly regretted it was not his lot to exist in the days of Roman splendour, and in the purest ages of latinity. He had an insatiable passion for the collection of manuscripts, medals, &c. and the discovery of any ancient inscription, or monumental fragment, that reminded him of those favourite times, affected him with the most lively sensibility. We are told, he cherished for the memory of Romulus a kind of religious veneration; and annually solemnized the day of the foundation of Rome. This occasioned him to be suspected and accused of paganism. But it is pretended his intentions were misinterpreted, forasmuch as this was done, merely with a view to awaken in the breasts of his scholars, a higher respect for the ancients, and a more ardent zeal for the study of their literary productions. Paulus

Petreius to be the bearer of it. He is a person in whose integrity I can fully confide; and

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Cortesius relates a repartee of Pomponius, to Domitius Calderinus: "cum ei Domitius Calderinus, homo inimicus dixisset, num ex animi sententiâ crederet esse Deum? Quidni inquit esse credam, cum ei nihil te odiosius esse putem." And indeed in some of his works he is said to have given proofs of his attachment to the christian religion, and respect for the holy see.

It was with the like view of promoting and extending an ardour for the study of the ancients, that he invited the academicians, his friends, to adopt the appellations of Greece and Rome, in testimony of their devotion to the pursuit of classic literature. "Rogatus Pomponius (scilicet a Judicibus," says Platina, de vitâ Pauli II.) "cur nomina adolescentibus immutaret? ut homo liber erat, "Quid ad vos, inquit, et Paulum, si mihi fœniculi nomen indo; modò id sine dolo et fraude fiat?" Amore namque vetustatis antiquorum præclara nomina repetebat, quasi quædam calcaria, quæ nostram Juventutem æmulatione ad virtutem incitarent." The pleasantry of this reply, says M. de la Monnoye *(notes to Baillet.—Deguisemens des Auteurs, p.* 89*)* will not be so obvious, unless it be recollected, first, that the examination of Pomponius, passed in the Italian language; secondly, that the Italian word "popone," signifies a melon; and "finocchio," fennel, both which Italy produces in singular abundance. As if he had said, it could be of no consequence either to the Pope or his judges, whether he called himself "Finocchio" or "Pomponio," provided his intention was innocent: alluding by a kind of equivoque, by "Pomponio," to the word "popone."

This person is termed Julius Pomponius Sabinus, in the title to a commentary on Virgil, attributed to him; but which he was desirous to disavow: and Julius Pomponius Fortunatus, in that of his notes on the tenth book of Columella. In a letter, written by one of his contemporaries, he is styled "Pomponius Lætus Fortunatus, togatorum eruditissimus." (See *de la Monnoye.*) Politian, in the 44th. chapter of his "Miscellanea," terms him "Romanæ Princeps Academiæ:" an honour apparently attributed to him by universal consent. Thus Michael Fernus, who superintended an edition of the works of Joan. Ant. Campanus, A. D. 1495, is cited by M. de la Monnoye, as therein addressing a letter to Pomponius, under the following title: "Dictatori

with the rest of our society, a warm and respectful admirer of your high literary charac-

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Perpetuo: Imperatori nostro maximo: Pomponio Læto."—Prefixed to the first printed edition of Lucan *(Romæ, 1469, in fol.)* is a life of that poet, by Pomponius, who is there surnamed Infortunatus, "Lucani Vita per Pomponium Infortunatum," it is supposed on account of the temporary disgrace and trouble, in which he was involved by the Pope's displeasure.

He is suspected of having intended to impose some of his own productions on the public as works of antiquity. It is even affirmed that several eminent modern scholars have considered and cited him as a grammarian of one of the middle ages: amongst whom are mentioned Petr. Pithæus, and Justus Lipsius: and more recently M. Vaillant, in one of his works on medals, places him in the list of ancient authors. Many of the works of Pomponius, it is said, were lost in a public tumult that happened at Rome, in the pontificate of Sixtus IV.

Pomponius was of a frank and ingenuous disposition, and extremely placable with regard to his literary opponents: "si pauvre au reste" (to quote the words of M. de la Monnoye) "que s'il eût perdu deux œufs, dit en riant son ami Platine lib. ix. de son traitè de cuisine, il n'auroit pas eu de quoi en racheter deux autres." Though labouring under a natural impediment in his speech, Cortesius says, that during his forty years' practice of delivering public lectures at Rome, he so far overcame it, as to express himself in a graceful and impressive manner, as well as with ease and fluency. Hermolaus Barbarus, and Pomponius Lætus, though of dissimilar tempers, lived on terms of strict intimacy: and we are informed, that the sombre and gloomy reservedness of the former was often agreeably dissipated by the facetious gaiety of the latter; in whom the character of hilarity was so predominant, that it is conjectured the surname of "Lætus" might have some reference to his disposition.

Concerning this remarkable scholar, Apostolo Zeno, *(in Dissertationibus Vossianis)* supplies us with some additional information. He observes, that the anger of Paul II. was particularly excited against Pomponius, because in a letter to Platina, he had termed him "patrem sanctissimum;" a title probably given, as well out of respect to his advanced age, as his ecclesiastical dignity. Paul sternly upbraided Platina on his examination with this circumstance. "Te,"

ter. Who that attributes to himself discernment can refrain from congratulating our age,

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inquit," pontificem creaverunt conjurati omnes." It appears that Pomponius during his absence from Rome, found an asylum at Venice, in " casa Cornara," in which he resided three years. *(Diss. Voss. tom.* ii. *p.* 234.*)*

He was a particular advocate for purity and simplicity of Latin style. He had imbibed the singular fancy that the ancients practised the art of printing; and that after it had been lost for many ages, the moderns were entitled only to the credit of restoring it. It is said that he founded this notion on a passage of St. Cyprian, ill understood: " Saturnus Litteras imprimere et signare nummos in Italiâ primus instituit." The celebrated Conrad Peutinger of Augusta, one of the restorers of learning in Germany, was a scholar of Pomponius; as was Alessandro Farnese, afterwards Pope Paul III. Lndov. Vives, says Vossius, laughs at Pomponius for consuming so much of his time and application in enquiring into the meaning of certain words, and points of history; and in the examination of fragments of antiquities and ruined monuments dug out of the earth. But, says Apostolo Zeno, the learned are in reality infinitely indebted to our early Italian scholars, who were the first to tread this track, by collecting and explaining ancient inscriptions, from which literature has received so great advantage. Pomponius was himself certainly an active cultivator of these studies, and strongly recommended them to his scholars. The house which he possessed " sul Quirinale" (now termed " il Monte Cavallo") was entirely ornamented with ancient remains collected by him; " era tutta ornata di lapide da lui raccolte:" and became, as it were, the museum of the academy over which he presided.

The story of his having wished to impose upon the public credulity, by forging some inscriptions which he passed off as ancient, is not denied by Apostolo Zeno; who quotes the testimony of Antonio Agostini in his eleventh dialogue, in proof of it. Agostini particularly mentions, " un Testamento, finto in molte parte con gran judicio," commencing thus:—" Dei optimi maximi numine invocato, &c. Hæc est L. Cuspidii dispositio, &c.:" but it is added, he therein makes mention of a son of his own, and says to him, " Vixisses, Læte, fili mi; fili mi vixisses:" whence he is discovered to be the author. Agostini, however, says, that he has found this forged testament, printed in more than one

on the possession of such men as you; in whom our forefathers would have gloried? He is eagerly preparing for his journey to Florence; in hope of frequently seeing you, and profiting by your instructions. Would I could accompany him! When I consider the

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collection; and that by many it is deemed of genuine antiquity. An epitaph also upon the poet Claudian, printed by Mazochio "nella raccolta delle inscrizioni di Roma a. c. viii." is supposed to be a forgery by Pomponius. *(Diss. Voss. ut supr. p.* 240, *&c.)*

A report having gone forth of the decease of Pomponius before it actually happened, Girolamo Bologni, "Cittadino Trivigiano, e Poeta Laureato," composed an epitaph upon him; and sent it to his friend Bartolomæo Partenio, then at Rome. By the answer of Partenio, it appears that he communicated this epitaph to Hermolaus Barbarus, who was also then resident in that city. These scholars hesitated some time whether they should shew it to Pomponius; but at length resolved so to do. When Pomponius saw the epitaph, with much laughter, and many exclamations, he declared, "se gratias Diis agere et autori—quòd ea quæ post mortem observari vetita sint, in humanis ipse legere valeret:" and wrote with his own hand a laconic epistle of thanks to the author. Apostolo Zeno says, that Pomponius survived till the year 1497, and that he died May 21 in that year, at about the age of seventy, at Rome; where he was interred, "nella Chiesa di San Salvatore in Lauro." Domico Palladio wrote an epitaph upon Pomponius, which occurs before his "Romanæ Historiæ Compendium," printed in the collection of the "Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores."

Hic jacet exiguâ Lætus Pomponius urnâ,
Cujus honos meritò pulsat utrunque polum.
Lætus erat Romæ, vates sublimis; et idem,
Rhetor nunc campis lætior Elysiis.

Pomponius, who was married, had two daughters: Fulvia Læta, and Melantho Læta; both celebrated for their classical attainments, and other accomplishments: whose "Elogia" may be found in the "*Icones Variæ*" of *Joan. Jac. Boissard. See also "Jugemens des Savans." tom. 2, prem. part. p.* 388. *Amst.* 1725, 12mo.

sublimity of your genius, I cannot help wondering that the studious of our city do not flock, if I may so speak "graculatim et sturnatim," like so many daws or starlings to attend you. I have perused your work, in which you seem, by your uncommon erudition, actually to have recalled the ancients from the shades. But enough; you stand in no need of my suffrage; the work is sufficient to establish your fame. When any question of importance occurs, Politian alone seems adequate to the solution. Of your talents and perspicacity I have already expressed the high opinion I entertain, in one letter, and that a long one: but how can one descant at sufficient length on such a subject. I presume you have delayed to return my Lucretius, in consequence of the variety of your studies and avocations. Restore him, I beseech and conjure you; "ad suum Quirinum redeat." I am in possession of some monuments of very great antiquity, the sight of which, would excite your astonishment and admiration. Happily rescued from the rubbish that concealed them, and restored to light; they would be doubly so by your notice and attention; for in these matters I recognise in you a kind of divinity; and your judgment is the true Promethean fire. *Romæ. ante* v. *Cal. Jun.*

Lib. i. ep. 17. "Those monuments of antiquity you speak of," says Politian in his reply, "how I long to handle, to embrace, to worship! If you possess any thing excellent in this way, I ad-

Ibid. ep. 18. jure you by fortune, impart it to us." *In Fæsulano.* VI. *Id. Aug.* 1491.

In these times, the ardour so recently enkindled, and so generally prevalent, to become acquainted with the languages of Greece and Rome, and to acquire a critical knowledge of those works justly esteemed the true models of perfection in every species of composition, was not confined to the male sex only. Even women were found to participate in the general emulation, and to vie with professors themselves in literary attainments. Two of these ladies, contemporaries with Politian, deserve, and have obtained from the pen of Mr. Roscoe, particular mention: Cassandra Fidelis, (*h*) a Venetian lady, and Alessandra, daughter of Bartholomæus Scala. With re- Life of Lor. de' Medici.

(*h*) The family of the Fedeli were originally of Milan. CASSANDRA is supposed to have been born *circa* 1465. She was early instructed in the Greek and Latin languages, elocution, and the aristotelic philosophy; which she evinced peculiar eagerness to attain. She maintained a literary correspondence with many of the learned of her age. Pamphilus Saxus has consecrated several of his poetical effusions to her praise. She is said to have been of morals pure and unblemished, great frankness of disposition, and an engaging modesty, and of a cheerfulness which occasionally rose to gaiety. Politian contrasts her with his friend Picus; considering her no less a prodigy amongst her sex, than he was amongst his. So greatly was he struck with her character and reputation, that he visited Venice almost solely with a view to see and converse with her. Not only men of learning, but princes, and persons of the most elevated rank of both sexes, vied in paying her marks of their respect, and were willing by great offers to induce her to visit and settle in their courts.

In the year 1487, Cassandra delivered a public oration before the university of Padua "pro Alberto Lamberto Canonico Concordiensi, consanguineo suo, philosophiæ insignia suscipiente;" which is yet extant. Some suppose her to have been in the practice of delivering public lectures in that university; but this is doubted by her biographer. Cassandra had once the honour of addressing a complimen-

spect to the former, the following letter of Politian will perhaps be no unacceptable ad-

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tary oration to "Bona Fortia, Sarmatorum Regina," when visiting Venice, which was delivered in the Bucentauro, sent out with a suitable train and magnificence to meet and escort her into the Venetian port; on which occasion the queen taking from the bosom of one of her ladies of honour, a magnificent gold-chain presented it to the fair speaker. The latter, consistently with that philosophic indifference which she had always evinced for this precious metal, the next day gave it into the hands of the doge.

Cassandra, as it may be imagined, had various suitors. The will of her father induced her to accept as a husband Jo. Maria Mapellius of Vicenza, (Vicentinus) a learned man, and a physician, in her connection with whom, she experienced various reverses of fortune. Attending her husband who passed some time in the isle of Candia (olim Crete) and perhaps in the city of Retimo, as public physician; she is said to have taken great pains to enquire after, visit, and examine such remains of antiquity as the island possessed. This learned lady became a widow in the year 1521. She addressed a letter to Pope Leo X. in which lamenting the death of her husband, she solicited his protection and patronage.

Cassandra had composed a work, "De Scientiarum Ordine," of which frequent mention occurs in her letters; but it was never published.

In her ninetieth year she was appointed to preside over a religious society of her own sex, at Venice. (Sacrarum Virginum Xenodochio S. Dominici Venetiis a majoribus præficitur.) She survived to a very advanced age, and on her decease was interred in the church of the same convent with great pomp and public honours.

Amongst the epistles of Cassandra and her friends, the following occur.

ANGELO POLITIANO CASSANDRA FIDELIS. *(Ep.* 102.*)*

Etsi fateor, decus ætatis nostræ, serò meas ad te dari epistolas, non tamen tuum est me negligentiæ accusare. Accusabo enim ego eodem te crimine; cum præsertim crebris literis tuis me visere sis pollicitus. Verum id puto non negligentiâ evenisse, sed nostræ potiùs benevolentiæ te esse oblitum, quod mihi ædepol gravius est. Perjucundum mihi qui-

dition to the interesting account of her already before the public.

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dem erat abs te amari, et numero tuorum amicorum ascribi. Si nostræ benevolentiæ immemor es, recordare saltem tuarum pollicitationum; nec Politiani esse idem affirmare et negare. Fac igitur ut principiis benevolentiæ consentiat exitus; quandoquidem tuos omnes propter te amo, te verò propter teipsum; ex quo te orare æquum est ut quod in animo tuo diù concepisti, aliquando parias; et aliquod te dictum *(fortasse dignum)* edas, ut ex ejus lectione, jucunditate et fructu perfrui valeamus. Tuum est hoc munus, gloria nostra; a te hoc Cassandra illa tua, vah! quid dixi, Cassandra,—quinimò civitas tua, flos totius orbis, omnes ferè mortales non expectant sed expostulant. Non utar hâc in re pluribus verbis, quod te facere certè scio. Reliquum est, ut iisdem precibus orem quibus soleo, ut me omnesque meos Marsilio Ficino nostro, ac Bartholomæo Scalæ, uti patri, viris doctissimis commendatos facias, necnon sorori meæ præstantissimæ Alexandræ. VI. *Idus Sextiles.*

Another fragment of a letter, "*Cassandræ Politiano,*" which follows the preceding, is dated *Kal. April.* 1494.

ANGELUS POLITIANUS CASSANDRÆ FIDELI.

Gravitèr epistola tua nos accusat quod posteaquam a te . . . . . sumus, neque literas misimus neque omninò præstitimus quæ tibi coram pollicebamur. Ego verò mea Cassandra, sicuti quod objicis fateor, ità afferre causam possum quamobrem cessâsse officium non indigneris. Nam cum te olim domi visurus salutaturusque venissem, quâ maximè causâ profectus Venetias fueram, tuque te diutiùs expectanti habitu quodam pulchro, pulcherrima ipsa, quasi Nympham de sylvis, btulisses, mox ornatissimis copiosisque verbis atque ut verissimè dicam, divinum quiddam sonantibus compellâsses, ità mihi animus repentè (quod te arbitror meminisse) miraculo illo tanto et rei novitate obstupuit, ut quod de se ait Æneas, "raris turbatus vocibus hiscerem," vixque illud saltem meam tibi excusare infantiam potuerit: posteà verò quam— *(Cætera desunt.)*

ALEXANDRA SCALA CASSANDRÆ FIDELI.

Quicunque isthinc huc ad nos proficiscuntur virtutem tuam prædicant, ut apud hos quoque summâ in admiratione

Lib. iii. ep. 17. *Angelus Politianus to Cassandra Fidelis.*

O decus Italiæ Virgo, quas dicere grates,
Virgil. Quasve referre parem !

"What adequate acknowledgments can I offer, for the honour of your letter: in what terms express my admiration, that such a letter should have been the production of a

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sit. De ingenio tuo, *(de)* doctrinâ, de moribus, nobis admiranda quædam et ferè incredibilia afferuntur. Quarè tibi gratulor, agoque gratias quòd non nostrum modò sexum, sed hanc quoque ætatem illustraveris. Vale. *Ex Florentiâ prid. Non. Oct.* 1492.

The following occurs in answer to a letter of Alessandra Scala, which does not appear in the collection:

CASSANDRA FIDELIS ALEXANDRÆ SCALÆ.

Ex tuis ornatissimis literis id prospeximus quod nobis fuit perjucundum, te nostram haud vulgarem benevolentiam judicâsse cum tua omnia me non modò cognoscere voluisti, verùm mecum de iisdem consulere. Scribis mea itaque Alexandra, utrum Musis an viro te dedas, ancipitem esse. Id tibi de hâc re eligendum censeo ad quod te magìs proclivem natura constituit; nam omne consilium quod recipitur, pro recipientis facultate recipi asserit Plato. Quod quidèm tibi erit perfacile factu, cum violentum perpetuum nullum. Vale IV. *Kal. Feb.* 1492. "*Cassandræ Fidelis Venetæ Epistolæ et Orationes Posthumæ.*" *Edidit cum vitâ ejus Jac. Phil. Thomasinus,* 8vo. *Patavii,* 1636.

But it would be unfair to judge of this lady's classical attainments from the foregoing specimens, which are given by Thomasinus in a very incorrect and mutilated state.

To the other youthful accomplishments of Cassandra, Tiraboschi adds a proficiency in music. She was invited to their respective courts by Leo X. by Louis XII. of France, and by the Queen of Spain. With the invitation of the latter, Cassandra was inclined to comply, but the

lady's pen: of one moreover, in the early morn of youth, yet surpassing the attainments of age and experience. It shall no longer be the exclusive privilege of antiquity, to boast of their Sybils, and their Muses. Let not the Pythagoreans tell us of their female proficients: the Socratics, of their Diotima, or Aspasia: nor Greece pride herself in the mention of her Telesilla, Corinna, Sappho, Anyte, Erinna, Praxilla, Cleobulina, and other votaresses of song that yet live in her recording pages. We will no longer call in question all that exulting Rome has told us, concerning the daughters of Lælius and Hortensius, and Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi: matrons surpassing senators in eloquence. It is not to be supposed that nature ever denied your sex the capacity requisite to the attainment of the highest literary excellence. It must indeed be confessed to the honour of ancient times, that persons, even of the lowest order, were not precluded from the means and opportunities of intellectual improvement. In our age, when those of our sex are few

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senate of Venice, tenacious of such an ornament, would not permit her to desert her native city. She ran great risk of being shipwrecked with her husband in their return from Candia. Tommasini and Niceron say, that at ninety years of age she was elected "Superiora delle Spadaliere de S. Dominico," at Venice, and having presided here twelve years, died in 1567, aged one hundred and two; but the time of her death was March 6, 1558; consequently she was either ninety-three years old when this happened, or if she lived to the more advanced age abovementioned, must have been born *circa* 1456. *Tiraboschi Storia della Poesia Ital. vol.* ii. *p.* 263, *of the edition of Mr. Mathias, in Londra,* 1803.

indeed who distinguish themselves by their erudition, that you should appear almost a solitary instance among yours, and greatly dare to relinquish the employments of the needle, and the devoirs of the toilette, for the pen of the student; is a spectacle no less novel and surprising, than would be the flowers and verdure of spring, amidst the dreariness of winter. If your commencements are thus prodigious, what may we not expect from the maturity of your studies!"

"Your distinctions are not less ingenious and acute, than your reasoning is forcible. Yet with elegant simplicity of expression, you intermingle that delicate playfulness of fancy, and those graces, peculiar to your sex, which cannot fail to render your letters highly agreeable. Your other compositions, replete with native traits of genius, display uncommon erudition, expressed in a rich, harmonious, and lucid style.—I hear too, that in conversation, you possess an appropriate felicity of language, which has been denied to men of the greatest literary eminence:—that you can disentangle the perplexities of scholastic disputation; resolve the most intricate questions, and propose the most perplexing: that on philosophical subjects, equally skilled in offensive and defensive argument, you dare to enter the lists with professors: yet with such propriety and grace, that your courage finds no disadvantage in your sex, your modesty in your courage, nor your ingenuity in your modesty: yet that while all commend you, you shrink from praise, with an engaging diffidence which renders you still more an object of admiration. I need not say how highly

gratifying to me, would be the pleasure of contemplating your personal accomplishments, and of listening to your conversation. How gladly should I regard you as my muse; how eagerly derive from your words and influence, that inspiration, which might suddenly light up my breast with the true spirit of poesy. I would then exclaim in the language of one of the bards of old,

"Nec me carminibus vincant aut Thracius Orpheus,
Aut Linus, huic mater quamvis, atque huic pater adsit,
Orphei Calliopea, Lino formosus Apollo." Virgil.

Alessandra, the accomplished daughter of Bartolemæus Scala, was no less distinguished by her personal beauty, than her literary acquirements. This lady gave her hand to the Greek Marullus; (*i*) and Politian is numbered

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(*i*) Michael Marullus Tarchaniota, who claimed descent from imperial ancestry, on the taking of Constantinople accompanied his parents into Italy. His first residence was at Ancona, but he afterwards removed to Florence, where he was hospitably received by Lorenzo de' Medici. A soldier from his early youth, he was, agreeably to his own confession, at the same time a votary of Mars and of the Muses.

According to authorities cited by Hody, Marullus at some period of his life availed himself of the instructions of Pontanus. It is certain he possessed the good opinion of Sannazarius, who not only makes honourable mention of him in his poems, *(Eleg.* II. *v.* 29, 30*)* but is supposed to have espoused his quarrel with Politian. Such is the motive assigned for those two acrimonious epigrams of Sannazarius, addressed "ad Pulitianum," which are levelled at the literary reputation of Politian. In the latter, "Vanas Gigantum iras, &c." invehitur noster (says Grævius, *notes to this Ep. Edit. Amstel.* 12mo. 1689.) in Politiani Miscellanea:—sed Dii boni!—quam lividè, quam parùm modestè:—nollem factum—Syncere, nollem."

Whether from indulgence or conviction, says the same

amongst her unsuccessful admirers; (*k*) which circumstance, it has been observed, may in some degree account for the asperities which marked his controversy with her father. She is said to have been assisted in her studies by Joannes Lascaris, and Demetrius Chalcondyles: but in evidence of her proficiency, it remains to be observed, that it qualified her to reply to a Greek epigram, which the gallantry of Politian addressed to her, in the same

Inter epigram. Politiani.

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critic, the productions of Marullus, were by the learned of his time, pronounced equal to those of the ancients, and their author declared worthy to take precedence even of Politian, whose extensive erudition and classic elegance certainly, with much greater justice, entitle him to such high praise. But more modern judges, far from assigning to Marullus the highest rank in polite literature, have pronounced him unworthy of the lowest. Grævius further declares, that he cannot otherwise account for the unqualified praises bestowed on Marullus by early scholars, unless it may be attributed to their surprize on seeing a native of Greece acquire such a facility of *throwing off Latin verses*. "Nisi quod inusitatum hactenus esset videre hominem Byzantinum qui magnâ volubilitate versus faceret latinos." Marullus was drowned in an inconsiderable river in Tuscany: his horse happening to plunge into a quicksand. Jovius places this event in the year 1499 or 1500. *(Vide Hodium de Græcis Illustr. et Pier. Valer. de infelicitate Literatorum.*

(*k*) DE SEIPSO, SEMPER AMANTE.

Sex ego cum plenâ perago trieteride lustra,
Nec placet in speculo jam mea forma mihi:
Nec responsurum spes improba fingit amorem,
Blanditiisque levem suspicor esse fidem:
Cum tamen hæc ita sint, capior miser illice vultu,
Et nunquam a durâ compede solvor amans.
Jam, jam militiâ nostræ contenta Juventæ
Desinat, aut ceston commodet alma Venus.

Inter Poemata Politiani.

language and measure; and that in a public representation of the "Electra" of Sophocles, at Florence, (*l*) this lady undertook to perform the principal female character: with what success, we may learn from Politian himself, if his judgment may be deemed sufficiently impartial. He addressed to her on this occasion the following Greek verses.

(*l*) CLASSICAL EXHIBITIONS of this kind were probably very frequent in the early periods of the revival of learning. Joannes Sulpitius Verulanus, in an early edition of Vitruvius, dedicated to Cardinal Rafaele Riario, if we may give credit to M. de la Monnoye, acquaints us that SCENICAL PAINTINGS AND DECORATIONS were first exhibited to modern times, on occasion of the performance, probably of a Latin comedy of Plautus or Terence at Rome, by the scholars of Pomponius Lætus. The passage is as follows. "Tu etiam primus picturatæ scenæ faciem, quum Pomponiani comœdiam agerent, nostro sæculo ostendisti."

It appears from the letters of Bembus (*Fam. Ep. lib. i. ep.* 18.) that in the year 1499, the "Trinummus," and "Pænulus" of Plautus, and the "Eunuchus" of Terence, were publicly performed at Ferrara, before numerous spectators with great applause. The words of Bembus are these.—"Non fuit tanti comitiis et foro interesse, ut ludis nostris careres. Nam ut scias quibus te voluptatibus defraudaveris, tres Fabulæ actæ sunt per hos dies: Plautinæ duæ; Trinummus et Pænulus: et una Terentii Eunuchus; quæ quidem ità placuit, ut etiam secundò et tertiò sit relata. Itaque quinque dies habuimus pulcherrimorum ludorum, ad quos cum magnus numerus confluxisset nostrorum civium (nôsti enim morem civitatis) &c. (*Epist. Angel. Gabrieli. Venetias.*) *Ex Ferrara. Cal. Mart.* MID.

This exercise under the direction of professors of humanity, became early a popular and useful instrument of education. Politian's "Prologus in Plauti Menæchmos" was composed at the request of one of his literary friends, expressly for an occasion of this sort. "Rogâsti me superioribus diebus ut quoniam fabulam Plauti, Menæchmos, acturi essent auditores tui, prologum facerem, genere illo versiculorum qui sunt comœdiæ familiares, &c." (*Ang. Pol. Paulo Comparino suo. Lib.* vii. *ep.* 15.)

ΕΙΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΑΝ ΤΗΝ ΠΟΙΗΤΡΙΑΝ.

ΗΛΕΚΤΡΗΝ ὑπεκριν' οποτ' ἀζυξ ἀζυγα κουρην
Κουρη Α'λεξανδρη τηνγε Σοφοκλειην,
Θαμβεομεν παντες, πως ἐυμαρες Ατθιδα γλωτταν
Ηπυεν ἀπταιστως Αὐσονις ἐσα γενος.
Πως δεγε μιμηλην προιεν και ἐτητυμον ἀυδην,
Τἀκριβες ἐντεχνε τηρεε πως θυμελης.
Πως ἠθος δ' ἐφυλαττεν ἀκηρατον ὀμματα γαιη
Πηξας, ουδ' ὁρμης ἠμβροτεν, ἐ Σασεως.
Ου δ' ἀσχημονεεν φωνην βαρυθακρυν ἱεισα,
Βλεμματι μυδαλεῳ συν δ ἐχεεν θεατας.
Παντες ἀρ ἐξεπλαγημεν, ἐμε ζηλος δ' υπενυξεν,
Ως τον ὁμαιμον ἐης ἐιδον ἐν αγκαλισιν.

TO ALESSANDRA SCALA.

ELECTRA's griefs, when ALESSANDRA feigns,
So well the maid a virgin's part sustains,
Athenian accents from a Tuscan tongue
With added sweetness charm the listening throng.—
What dignity, what grace our souls engage!
Thus would Electra's self have trod the stage!
Each look, each gesture nature's semblance wears,
And nature pleads in her impassion'd tears!
But when the fair—with love too well exprest,
Folds her Orestes to her heaving breast;
How do I long to fill the envied place,
And wistful—sigh to share that dear embrace.

An insatiable passion for an acquaintance with the Greek language, is said to have been first excited in the youthful bosom of the celebrated Hen. Stephanus, by frequently hearing his fellow-students of a more advanced age declaim from the "Medea" of Euripides. See *Baillet; Enfans Célébres, &c.*"

To augment the number of literary prodigies which distinguished this interesting period, the subsequent letter furnishes an instance of remarkable precocity of genius in a child, whom Baillet has omitted to enumerate among his "Enfans Célébres."

Angelus Politianus to Picus of Mirandula. Lib. xii. ep. 2.

"I sincerely wish you had been of our party to-day, at the table of Paulus Ursinus; who is a gentleman not only of distinguished military celebrity, but partial to letters, and literary society. He has a child of the name of Fabius, a youth of eleven years of age, of singular beauty and endowments. His fine auburn hair falls gracefully on his shoulders. He has an eye sparkling with intelligence, an open countenance, a person elegantly formed, and a most graceful carriage, which inclines a little to the military. When the party had taken their seats, this child was desired to accompany some persons of skill, in singing several airs set to music: which he did with so melodious a voice, that for my own part I listened with extasy. He afterwards recited an heroic poem in praise of my pupil Piero de' Medici, of his own composing; for that it really was so, and not the work of another, (as I at first suspected) I had afterwards an opportunity of ascertaining by indubitable evidence. And what kind of a composition do you think it was? Really such an one as I myself should not need to be ashamed of. His

tones were not merely those proper to reading, nor altogether modulated as in singing; but formed by a pleasing inflection of voice between both. As the subject required, they were uniform or varied, with exact regard to connection and pause: acute or grave: easy or emphatical: quick or slow: yet always correct, always distinct, always agreeable. His action was neither indolent and unanimated, nor yet bold, and forward. You would have vowed another little Roscius stood before you. He was suddenly requested to turn the verse into prose, and repeat the same thoughts unconfined by measure. Accordingly, after a short interval of consideration, he began again, in a manner perfectly unassuming; and I was astonished to hear from his youthful lips, a flow of expression so select and appropriate, as the pen seldom supplies. Are you already surprized? You will be still more so with what followed. The boy had completed his task, and was ordered to take his food, standing: for such is his constant custom. After the first remove, I was requested to propose subjects to him for epistolary composition: as many as I pleased: on which he was to dictate, extempore, to several amanuenses at once. I mentioned only five: not willing to bear too hard upon the child: though he engagingly insisted on more. But the subjects which I selected on this occasion, were of a nature so various and novel; and some of them so ludicrous, that I am convinced he could not have been previously prepared for them. Immediately five persons, with pens, ink and paper, placed themselves in order, to write as he should dictate. The boy, standing in a conspicuous

situation, fixes his eyes modestly upon the ground, and pauses a moment; then raising his head, dictates a few words to the person who sits highest; makes a sign to the second, and gives him instructions on a different subject: and proceeds in like manner with the rest, down to the lowest: then returning to the first, so fills up every chasm, and connects the suspended thread of his argument, that nothing appears discordant or disjointed; and at the same instant, who would have thought it, he finishes the five letters. Afterwards, we rode out to see the combatants in the Giostra; (*m*) and amongst them Piero de' Medici my charge. On this occasion an accident happened that greatly discomposed me: but on reflection, served to confirm me in the belief that this was no ordinary child. Young Fabius was carried by a beautiful and spirited palfrey, of which he is uncommonly fond: on this he bounded over the field, and expatiated at pleasure;—now urging it to full speed;

(*m*) That these "Giostri" were not infrequent at Florence, may be inferred from a letter of Politian to Picus. *Lib.* xii. *ep.* 7. "Celebravit hodiè nostra juventus equitum certamen hastis concurrentium, quo mihi spectaculo carere penè non licebat, certè non libuit. Tu tamen a me solos fieri poetas aut oratores putas, at ego non minus facio bellatores. Et vicerunt omnino quos optarem, Petrus Medices, ac Laurentius Tornabonus; noster uterque non discipulus modò sed alumnus. Duplex ibi palma, prioremque Petrus, alteram Laurentius abstulit; sed insigni tamen populi totius acclamatione, plausuque multiplici: videlicet admiratio quædam suffragabatur, quod primæ nobilitatis juvenes, aliàs in togâ et foro conspicui, cum militibus exercitatissimis concurrerant, et eos in ipsorum quod dicitur harenâ superaverant, &c."

—now wheeling about, with as much dexterity as spirit. He happened to be near me, listening with eagerness to my literary *bagatelles*, which had deeply arrested his attention; when, on a sudden his horse, stumbling against an impediment in the way, came down upon his young rider. The child uttered a shriek. The servants hastened with all speed, each eager to relieve him in this alarming crisis; one of whom, dismounting too precipitately, fractured his leg. All was alarm and confusion. For my own part I remained stupified with horror. The father arrives,—admonishes the child not to be alarmed; the latter no sooner perceived him to be present, than, which I considered as a strong proof of a noble spirit, he entirely ceased all complaints and exclamations,—and only requested they would proceed with gentleness and caution, lest the horse, in the violence of his efforts to rise, should injure him more severely. The girths were cut as the creature lay, and young Fabius was at length drawn from under him, and restored in safety to his trembling friends; but so chafed with the accident, that it became adviseable to convey him home. For my own part, I found my spirits so much fluttered, that I left the spectacle and came home also; scarcely able to persuade myself that the child was safe; and terrified almost to death, with the impression this alarming circumstance had made on my mind.

Such is one day's history of young Fabius Ursinus: who if he lives to complete the measure of his days, (which God grant he may) and perseveres in the path of renown, as he has begun, will, I venture to predict, prove

such a person as the present age glories in considering you :—that is to say, one whom for his admirable qualities and attainments, mankind must unite to venerate as something more than human. *Adieu.*"

Thus have we endeavoured to exhibit Politian, as a scholar and a professor, in that favourable point of view, in which he deserves to be considered; and to evince the services which, by his lectures and writings, he rendered to the reviving cause of letters. We have traced him through some of those scenes in which he acted a conspicuous part, on the public theatre of life, in conjunction with the great and the learned of his age. It has been our object to select from his poetical works, and his epistolary correspondence, such passages as may enable the reader duly to appreciate both his talents and moral qualities. That part of his private and domestic history which results from his more immediate connection with the family of Lorenzo de' Medici, has recently been given, with so much ability and interest, that a repetition of it in this volume would be more than superfluous. In his amicable intercourse with Giovanni Pico of Mirandula, he will again frequently present himself to our notice;—for the literary histories of Picus and Politian are not to be separated. Many unsatisfactory, and some ridiculous causes have been assigned for the premature decease of this eminent scholar and restorer of letters: but his early removal from a state of existence so fragile and uncertain, requires not to be accounted for in any

Roscoe's Life of Lor. de' Medici.

Vide Jovium in Elogiis; Menckenium in vitâ Polit. &c.

extraordinary manner. He died at Florence, upon the 24th. day of September, 1494, in the forty-first year of his age.

Various judgments have been pronounced on the writings and literary merits of Politian. Some remarks on these subjects may be found in the preceding pages. The following is the decision of a critic (*n*) of our own times: it must, however, be restricted to his Latin compositions. "Politian cultivated polite letters with a success hardly equalled by that of any other scholar. He was, however, more happy in prosaic composition than in poetry. To every work he brought a genius full of life and activity. But he was diffuse and daring, more resembling Lucan than Virgil. It was his earnest endeavour to support constantly a kind of pomp of sentences, which having extended beyond moderate bounds of cadence, he endeavoured generally to finish with a pointed close. A plan, which in familiar writing, such as his "Rusticus" should

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(*n*) See the preface to a small volume, intituled, "Anthologia, seu selecta quædam Poemata Italorum qui Latinè scripserunt," published at London, 1684, in 12mo. by a person who chose to conceal his name, but whom Dr. Johnson has pronounced well qualified for his undertaking. Pope republished this selection with considerable additions, in two volumes, 12mo. But, as Dr. Johnson has remarked, he injuriously omitted the learned preface of his predecessor. *(Life of Pope, Johnson's Prefaces Biogr. et Lit.)* An annotator on Johnson observes, that the publisher of the selection of 1684, is since discovered to have been Atterbury, afterwards bishop of Rochester. The above translation of bishop Atterbury's judgment upon the works of Politian which appears in Latin in the former edition of these memoirs, is here given in the words, and at the suggestion of a candid and sensible writer in the British Critic. *Vol.* xix. *p.* 401.

have been, is not exactly suitable. You will find in him, however, many things beautifully expressed, and worthy of the highest estimation, which will stand the test of criticism, and may be approved almost without exception."

MEMOIRS

OF

JOANNES PICUS OF MIRANDULA.

Παυλα παρ ἀνθρωποισι μαθων ἀνθρωπινα, ΠΙΚΟΣ
Θεια προς ἀθαναθς ἠλθε μαθησομενος.

MENAGE.

GIOVANNI, son of GIOVAN-FRANCESCO PICO, (*a*) PRINCE of MIRANDULA and CONCORDIA, was born at Mirandula, Feb. 24, 1463. His mother, whose name was JULIA, was of the noble house of BOIARDO. The offspring of Giovan-Francesco, by this lady, were, Ga-

(*a*) The family of Pico had claim to great antiquity, and even pretended to deduce its origin from the Roman Emperor Constantine.

QUEM fugit egregiæ clarissima gentis origo,
Et vetus a PICI sanguine ducta domus?

leozzo, the eldest, father of Giovan-Francesco, who afterwards succeeded to the government of the principality, and has left an account of his uncle's life;—Antonio-Maria, the second son;—two daughters, who both survived to years of maturity, and intermarried with some of the most illustrious houses of Italy;—and lastly, Giovanni, the subject of the present narrative. In those days of superstition and credulity, it was not uncommon for preternatural incidents to be feigned or imagined, to distinguish the birth and decease of extraordinary persons. The prince, his nephew and biographer, informs us, that at the precise hour of Giovanni's birth, a ball of fire was seen hovering in the air, exactly over his mother's chamber, which having remained visible for a short time, suddenly disappeared. The circular form, substance, and conspicuous nature of this prodigy, he supposes to have denoted the perfection and ardency of intellect which were to characterise the person then about to be ushered into the world, and the extensive fame and admiration he would acquire; its speedy disappearance, the brevity of the career he was destined to run; and that while the astonished gaze of mankind should be earnestly fixed upon him, as upon the me-

In vitâ Joan. Pici operibus præfixâ. Edit. Basileæ, anno 1601, in fol. impressa.

Utque alios taceam tua quos Mirandula belli
Et pacis magnâ non sine laude tulit.
Ille tuus genitor, cujus tu nomine nomen
Parte refers, summo dignus honore fuit.
Te verò peperit Latiarum gloria matrum
Boiarda haud humili JULIA nata loco.

Titi Vesp. Strozæ Aelostichon. Lib. iii. *p.* 112. *Edit. Aldin.* 1513.

teor in question, he would no less unexpectedly vanish from their sight.

Picus was, in all probability, very young when his father died; and the care of his education devolved upon his mother, who provided him with approved masters in every branch of study then deemed necessary to form the gentleman and the scholar; and his progress in polite letters did not merely equal, but far surpassed the most sanguine expectation of his friends. They were, with reason, astonished to perceive in a child a maturity of judgment, vigour of intellect, and correctness of taste in the composition both of verse and prose, which would not have disgraced professors themselves. Such was his quickness of apprehension, that he at once understood,—such his tenaciousness of memory, that he retained without difficulty, the instructions of his preceptors. Of his powers of reminiscence, particulars are related which almost exceed credibility. If he heard a poem but once recited, he could, it is said, not only repeat the whole exactly in the same, but to the astonishment of his audience, do the like in a retrograde order; and we are assured, that nature had constituted him a remarkable exception from a rule almost universal in its application, that they who possess the greatest celerity of apprehension retain only for a short time, what they acquire without effort; while the slow student, and he who apprehends with difficulty, is scarcely ever observed to lose by forgetfulness, that which cost him so much labour in the acquisition.

Early designed by his mother for the

church, Picus was at her instance, sent at the age of fourteen to Bologna, to acquire a knowledge of the pontifical, or canon law. To this study, jejune and disgusting in itself, and grounded only on remote usages and obscure traditions, he applied with great patience and perseverance for two years; during which time, he composed an abbreviated digest, or manual of the pontifical letters, termed decretals; so arranged as to furnish an expeditious mode of deducing from these confused sanctions the conclusions desired: and this work, the production of so juvenile a pen, would, it is observed, have done credit to the most accomplished professor.

Vita Pici ut supra.

But however little minds might have acquiesced in such trite and circumscribed acquirements, the vigorous and speculating intellect of Picus, impatient of the unworthy trammels imposed upon it, demanded a wider range for the exercise of its powers. Anxious, therefore, to grasp all those branches of scholastic and metaphysical science, which, in a great measure, constituted the learning of the day, he at length quitted the university of Bologna; and visiting successively all the most celebrated schools and colleges of Italy and France, sought out every individual scholar and professor of distinction; and like another Plato, or Apollonius, entered into the most minute discussions with them, for the sake of acquiring knowledge; so that before he had attained the age of manhood, he was no less universally than deservedly recognised as a most consummate philosopher and divine.

Ibid.

This precocity of genius, for which Picus

was so remarkable, must naturally lead to the conclusion, that his early years passed not without producing a variety of compositions worthy of such talents and attainments. In fact, many of those of his letters which are still extant, appear to have been written whilst he was yet very young. He early distinguished himself as a poet, by his compositions both in the Latin and in the Italian language; almost all of which, as they were disapproved either by the nicety of his maturer judgment, or by the purity of his religious and moral feelings, at a later period, he was induced to destroy. Yet the productions of his juvenile pen, had they experienced the fortune to survive to the present times, would, perhaps, have been perused with greater interest, than those profound and abstruse speculations of his maturer years, which still remain; and his classical and academical effusions would have invited the curiosity which his scholastic and cabalistic writings serve only to intimidate and deter. Of the early letters of Picus, many might be selected which tend greatly to support the high juvenile reputation of their author. But in investigating the literary pretensions of Picus, before he arrived at the age of manhood, we have to contend with many difficulties, arising from the want of documents necessary to illustrate a scientific career marked with such premature attainments. It has been already observed, that he spent seven years in visiting the various seats of learning; and it would no doubt prove an interesting, were it a practicable undertaking, to follow his steps from place to place; to witness those coruscations of genius which

rendered him the object of general admiration, and caused his friendship to be courted by veteran scholars of the highest rank and celebrity.

After he had quitted the university of Bologna, the academies of Ferrara, Padua, Florence, and Perugia, successively, became the respective scenes of his indefatigable studies. That after Bologna, Ferrara was first ornamented by so distinguished a student, his nephew and biographer expressly informs us. We find he was in the habit of addressing Battista Guarino, (*b*) in his letters, by the respectful title of *Præceptor*, a circumstance,

Pici opera, p. 260.

(*b*) BAPTISTA GUARINUS, sprung from an illustrious family of Verona, was the son of Guarino, commonly known by the surname of "*Veronese*." He inherited his father's erudition and celebrity, and filling with no less reputation the chair of humanity-professor at Ferrara, his lectures contributed to enhance the credit of that university. Gregorio Giraldi *(nel Dial.* 1. *de Poeti del suo tempo)* values himself on having been his scholar. How highly Aldus Manutius prized his instructions may be inferred from this circumstance, that to him he afterwards inscribed his edition of Theocritus, Hesiod, and other Greek poets printed A. D. 1495. In the dedication addressed to him, he terms him, "Præceptor doctissimus," and confesses the great advantage he had, when a student, derived from his lessons, with regard both to the Greek and Latin languages. Such a scholar as Aldus, Maffei well observes, would alone suffice to immortalize his memory. In what credit he was with the other learned of the age, may appear from the single testimony of Politian. *(Lib.* i. *Ep.* 20.) Writing upon a point of disputable criticism, "Since you," says he, "the most eminent professor of our age, think differently from me upon this subject, I no longer place any confidence in my own opinion."

Many of the poems of Battista Guarino were collected and published, *Mutinæ*, A. D. 1495, in 4to. Some of these are addressed to Picus; others to Hermolaus Barbarus; but they seldom rise above mediocrity. Other poems of his, yet

which proves that he for some (perhaps no very short) time, ranked among Guarino's scholars in that city; but the modest tutor pleasantly declines this appellation, and insists upon transferring it on the pupil; asserting that Pico's rapid advances in literature were to be attributed solely to the powers of his own genius, which superseded or outstripped the ordinary course of instruction.

It is apparent from the assertion of Picus himself, that he studied at Padua two years. What portion of his juvenile years he spent at Florence, it seems more difficult to ascertain. He certainly formed an early connection with the platonic Ficinus, (c) to whose paternal

Epist. Hermolao Barbaro. oper. p. 255.

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unpublished, are said to exist in MS. Two letters by Guarinus occur among those of Picus, four among those of Politian. Various smaller works of his are enumerated by Maffei. He was the first editor of the commentary of Servius upon Virgil. The fine edition of 1471 proclaims its own correctness in an epigram which occurs at the conclusion of the volume:

——— Sunt exemplaria quippe
Emendata tuâ, magne GUARINE, manu.
Edidit ille mei genitus Baptista Guarini
In lucem, nullo tempore visa priùs.

But he particularly signalized himself by his emendations of Catullus; and his learned corrections of, and notes upon that author were carefully preserved and published by Alessandro his son, who appears to have been the father of Battista, the author of "Il Pastor Fido." *(Plura vide apud Maffeium; Verona Illustrata.)*

(c) A life of MARSILIUS FICINUS, *Auctore Joanne Corsio Patricio Florentino, ejus familiari et discipulo,* has recently been published by Bandini; *Pisis;* 8vo. 1771. Corsius speaking of Picus says; "Hic quum Florentiam venisset, ædes Marsilio vicinas conduxit humiles admodum, quas tamen ferè triennium habitavit." *(Ficini Vita. p. 65.)*

exhortations, impressed upon a mind from childhood inflamed with a love of science. he professes himself greatly indebted. But whether for a long, or a short period only, he shared, as a scholar, the instructions of Ficinus, he maintained a very close, and a lasting communication with him, on the less restrained footing of a friend. We discover him at a variety of intervals at Florence, and from his early and repeated visits thither, may justly conclude that his celebrated friendship with Angelus Politianus commenced in his juvenile days. This friendship, strengthened with increasing years, constitutes the most interesting feature of his life, and was dissolved only by death. In a correspondence which passed between them, when Picus had scarcely completed his nineteenth year; "So highly" says Politian, "do I esteem your letter, my dear Picus, that I think myself incapable of dictating a suitable answer: such, on the other hand, is the candour and benevolence of your disposition, that I am convinced you will take in good part any thing that proceeds from my pen. Had I words to express my sentiments, I should attempt to extol your genius, letters, and eloquence, as they merit; but I must on this occasion follow the example of Timantes, and what I cannot do justice to with my pencil, cover with a veil. . . . . To you I acknowledge myself, on many accounts, a debtor; nor shall I pretend to enumerate every individual obligation: but the elegant letter addressed to me by our learned friend Manuel, (*d*) I esteem a new accession to the

Ep. Mars. Ficino, oper. p. 253.

Polit. Ep. Lib. i. ep. 6.

(*d*) The learned Greek whom Politian here mentions,

number of your kindnesses; a letter, the mellifluous diction of which exceeds in flavour

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was EMANUEL ADRAMYTTENUS, a native of Crete, and an exile. He, flying the despotism of Mahomet II. found an hospitable shelter in the kindness of Picus, who availed himself of his instructions in the study of the Greek language. Manuel was the intimate friend of the celebrated ALDUS MANUTIUS, who having himself passed some time at Ferrara, as a hearer of Battista Guarino, was constrained to quit that city when it was besieged by the Venetians, in the year 1482, and seek a temporary asylum at Mirandula, in the hospitality of young Picus. It was indubitably about the same period that the above letters were written, which are given without a date, *inter epistolas Politiani*. A letter, which Aldus himself addressed some years afterwards to Politian, may serve to place this fact in a clearer point of view.

ALDUS MANUTIUS ROMANUS, TO ANGELUS POLITIANUS.

"The present year is the third from that period when the Venetians were occupied in besieging Ferrara. Desirous at that time to escape horrors, which seemed to indicate the particular wrath of heaven, so much did they surpass the ordinary consequences of warfare; I quitted the city of Ferrara, and repaired to Mirandula, to Giovanni Pico, the most learned nobleman of our age; knowing him to be a friend of literate men, and an encourager of the arts. There, Emanuel Adramyttenus, my very intimate acquaintance, shewed me a Greek letter which you had addressed to him, written with so much elegance, erudition, and fluency, that it seemed rather the production of a native of Athens, who had passed his whole life in that seat of letters, than of a Roman. From that time, my dear Angelus, I became a warm admirer of your genius and learning, and have ever since cherished for you the sincerest regard. Emanuel soon afterwards accompanied his prince and patron to Pavia, where a few months ago, he departed this life; and so much was I affected by his death, that no event, during the course of many years, has occasioned me so much regret. He was indeed, a man of the most polished manners, and deeply skilled in Greek literature; and moreover, a very affection-

the honey of that Hymettus, whence indubitably it was collected: a letter more delicious

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ate friend of mine. Deprived of such an one, how can I do otherwise than mourn a separation, by which, however, he is much less a loser than myself; for of his happy admission into a better state of existence I entertain no doubt; acquainted, as I am, with the pure and upright tenor of his life. The misfortune, therefore, if it may be termed such, applies only to myself.

He, as I observed, set out for Pavia, whilst I departed from Mirandula for Carpi, at which place our Picus having some months afterwards arrived, took occasion to shew me your "RUSTICUS," a poem which greatly augmented the regard I had previously conceived for its author; and served to evince the amazing extent of your talents, industry, and literary acquirements: nor do I fear the suspicion of flattery, Ἐι σαυτον γινωσκεις, for you must be conscious that these expressions fall far short of your deserts. I refrain from enumerating the handsome things Picus himself said of you, and that, uniformly, as often as your name was mentioned; as well as the information I received from Alexander Sartius of Bologna, a person of unquestionable veracity,

"integer vitæ, scelerisque purus:"

and, as far as can be presumed from his own assertions, a very zealous admirer of your character. Not to be tedious, —stimulated by this celebrity of yours, I could no longer resist the desire I felt of writing to you; of assuring you how much I am at your devotion; how gladly I should embrace any occasion of testifying my readiness to serve you. I cannot find words to describe the fervent attachment I feel to men of extraordinary erudition: an attachment which hath impelled me to address you at this time, to solicit that with your accustomed complacency to the studiously disposed, you will condescend to number me amongst your friends. This is what I ask with all possible earnestness. I shall then deem my suit granted, when I find you command me at your pleasure, with as little ceremony as you would your own domestics; a freedom to which those superlative talents entitle you; which at the same time constitute me, while life shall last, wholly yours. *Adieu.*" (*Inter Ep. Polit. Lib.* vii. *ep.* 7.)

Aldus, though induced to avail himself of the lectures of

than nectar. I have placed him precisely in the circumstances of Glaucus, by exchanging with him brass for sterling gold. For who can be unconscious how much these "ἐπιχωριοι τοις Ἑλλησιν Αττικισμοι," these Attic flowers indigenous to Grecian soil, degenerate on this side of the sea. I hope, however, for more indulgence from criticism on this very account, because I am a native of Latium. On the contrary, if found guilty of writing unclassical Latin, this must be my plea,—that I am considered as a *smatterer in Greek*. Thus, like the bat, whilst I class with neither beasts nor birds, I endeavour to ingratiate myself with both parties."

Quod græcissare putamur.

The answer of Picus is characterised by that modesty which appears so peculiarly amiable in a youthful correspondent. "My

Ep. Pici, oper. p. 247.

Battista Guarino, had himself a pupil of very exalted rank. He was entrusted with the education of prince Alberto Pio, the nephew of Picus, a young nobleman of great promise, who afterwards shone conspicuously among the most learned and enlightened of the Italian nobility, and rewarded his preceptor's labours with very munificent marks of favour and esteem. Adopted into the noble family of his ward, he was permitted to assume the name of Aldus Pius Romanus; by which name he was from that time designated. His departure from Mirandula to Carpi was in order to rejoin the prince, his pupil; but the latter having been called by affairs of moment to Pavia, was followed thither by Aldus. At this city, holding frequent literary conferences with young Albert and Picus, he was led, principally by their united instances (as the indefatigable and accurate Apostolo Zeno believes) to form the first design of that noble typographical institution, to which literature became subsequently indebted for so many invaluable editions of the best Greek and Latin authors. *(Manni vita di Aldo, p.* 11 *et alibi,* 8vo, *in Venezia,* 1759.)

obligations," says he, "to you, Politian, for the praises you bestow upon me in your last letter, are proportionable to my consciousness how much I fall short of deserving them; since obligation originates from that which is gratuitously given, and not from that which is paid as a debt. I am, therefore, your debtor for all the handsome things you say of me. As I find in myself nothing that corresponds with your praise; as you owe me nothing of the kind, the whole is to be placed to the account of your peculiar good will, and partiality for me. If in other respects you duly weigh my pretensions, you will discover nothing but what is trivial, humble, and circumscribed. I am but a *tyrunculus*, a mere novice, who have just advanced one step from the darkness of ignorance, and no further. It were sufficiently kind in you to place me in the rank of students: the name of a learned man has something more in it, which applies to yourself alone, or to such as you. Little do these exalted titles accord with me; since of the leading branches of science so far am I from being a master, that I behold them, as it were, through a glass, and with a distant prospect. I shall, however, strive, as indeed I now do, to become in future, such as you represent me to be at present; what you are pleased to think, or at least wish me to be. In the mean time, my Angelus, I will follow your example, who excuse yourself among Greeks, on the plea of being a native of Latium; among Latins, because you are a *smatterer in Greek*. Allow me to adopt a similar subterfuge: to approve myself to poets and rhetoricians, because I am said to philosophise;

to philosophers, because I pretend to *rhetorise*, and pay my court to the muses. But alas! my fate must be far different from yours: whilst I wish to rest, as they say, upon two supporters, I fall between both; and the result in short is, that I am neither a rhetorician, nor a philosopher. You, on the contrary, so well maintain your double character; so honourably embrace the erudition of both Greece and Rome, that it can scarcely be discerned which in you is genuine, which insititious. To say nothing of the one, (for to whom do you give place in Roman erudition?) who would think, as one said of Hadrian, that a native of Latium should prove himself so fluent a Grecian. Our friend Emanuel protested as he perused your letter, "that Athens herself was not so Attic." With you, my Angelus, flattery apart, few or none of our country deserve to be compared: were there but more such, the present age would have little reason to envy antiquity. Go on, I intreat you, exert all your powers to rescue letters from decay, and to preserve the splendour of the Roman tongue from being entirely tarnished and effaced by the injuries of age. Cease not to oblige the public from time to time, with something new, to aid and illustrate classic lore; and let those works which are now confined to your study, be speedily brought to light for the advantage of the studious."

Picus, at this and many subsequent periods, passed those intervals in which he was not engaged in some literary excursion, in his rural retreat, at Fratta, in the neighbourhood of Mirandula. In a letter, dated June, 1482,

Pici Ep. Nicolao Leoniceno operum, pag. 247.

he informs Nicolaus Leonicenus, (*e*) who had been driven from Ferrara by the calamities of war, that he has lately erected in the vicinity of this city a villa, as pleasant and complete as the nature of the scite would admit; and that he has also written a long poem in its praise. Inviting the worthy professor to come and spend some time with him in his new habitation, Picus expresses a hope that he will be pleased both with his villa and his verses. Amongst the individuals who suffered most severely by the effects of that war which now raged between the Venetians and the little state of Ferrara, was Titus Vespasianus Stroza, at once the kinsman and friend of Picus. Stroza, in a poetical epistle to Picus, has given a feeling description of the horrors and devastations that attended these hostilities. About the same time Picus, not unsusceptible of the tender passion, appears to have solicited the Ferrarese poet to celebrate his amours. The unfortunate bard, however, urges the

Strozæ Patris et Filii Poem. p. 106. Edit. Aldin. 8vo. 1513.

(*e*) Nicolaus Leonicenus, a native of Vicenza, was born A. D. 1428. He filled the chair of professor in medicine, philosophy, and classical learning at Ferrara, with the greatest reputation, for more than sixty years. This celebrated man, who had to struggle with a dangerous infirmity during the first thirty years of his life, passed the remainder of his days, to the advanced age of ninety-six, in perfect health, and the complete enjoyment of his mental powers: which is attributed to his simplicity of manners, strict temperance, and great equability of disposition. He died A. D. 1524. The senate of Ferrara honoured his memory with a monumental inscription, declaratory of his learning, virtues, and eminent literary services. (*See Dict. Histor. de la Médecine par M. Eloy.*) His works, which are numerous, have respect principally to medicine and natural history.

calamities of the times and his own unhappy circumstances, as reasons for declining so playful a task. Thus he expostulates with his gayer friend, in numbers, not indeed the most polished and classical: but perhaps adversity on this occasion operated to depress the flights of his muse.

——— Ut scribam teneros hortaris amores,
Ut tua sit versu nota Neæra meo,
Ut tibi flamma recens in lucem candida per me
Phyllis eat: cuperem, Pice, quod ipse rogas.
Quam sperare meis famam queat utraque dictis?
Nullum enim extincto fulgur ab igne venit.
Parce recusanti; non quòd tuus omnia Titus
Quæ tibi sunt cordi non obeunda putet,
Sed non sollicitos læta argumenta poetas
Poscunt; est vacuâ mente canendus Amor.
Nec quisquam meliùs quam tu qui vulnera sentis
Dicere quæ soli sunt tibi nota valet.
Adde quòd ingenium felix sortitus; et omni
Doctrinâ insignis; quod petis intus habes.
Sive quid Argolico, seu quid sermone Latino
Tentâris, linguam doctus utramque tenes.
Sive aliquid prosâ scribis—seu carmina condis
Pallada sic jurem Pieridasque loqui.
Cui magis innumeras rerum causasque, viresque,
Juraque Naturæ condita nosse datum est.
Quis lunæ solisque vias, et lucida coeli
Metitur tanto sydera judicio.
Quis numeros omnes ad summam colligit unam
Tam subitò, et mirâ certiùs arte notat.
Quis res propositas ità disserit acer, et omni
Irretitum hostem cum ratione tenet?
Quis te, de superis et Relligione loquentem
Non admirandum duxerit esse virum?

Te matura senem prudentia reddidit, atqui
Prima tenet roseas vix tibi barba genas.

Why Picus! why to love recal my lays,
And bid me sing your own Neæra's praise,
Or Phyllis fair; the maid whose beauty fires
Your breast, susceptive still of new desires?
Say, can extinguish'd embers yield a flame?
Then may my Muse transmit their charms to fame.
Urge me no more—yet think not I decline
With cynic frowns, the labours you assign:
No—themes so light my pensive strains refuse,
Nor brooks the Paphian God a weeping muse.
But who, like you, that feel the pleasing smart
Can speak the joys, the fears your loves impart?
Genius, like yours:—those pow'rs that can pervade
Each maze of science,—ask no foreign aid.
You—skill'd alike in each, the classic store
Possess of Grecian and of Latian lore.
Weave you the verse,—or flows the unmeasur'd line,
Here Pallas prompts—and there each Muse divine.
Who scans like you of every mighty cause
The effect? profoundly read in nature's laws,
Of each bright orb that high in ether burns
Who unfolds like you the wanderings and returns?
Who so expert in numbers' magic powers?
Who so sublime on reasoning pinion soars?
Or when the Stagyrite's art some theme propounds,
The opponent's skill so tortures and confounds?
But when diviner themes your breast inspire,
What glowing words that elocution fire!
Strange! that in wisdom, you whose aspect wears
The bloom of youth, should rival hoary hairs.

The task then of poetically celebrating his own gallantries devolved upon Picus himself: and that he performed it, we need no other testimony than the following interesting correspondence, of uncertain date, to which these compositions afterwards gave rise.

Joannes Picus Mirandula, to Angelus Politianus. Pici oper. p. 252.

"Having digested into five books those indifferent effusions of my muse, in which I trifled with my own LOVES, at an age when such levities are excusable; I send you the first book, and design hereafter to submit the remainder to your revisal, provided I find you in the present instance a friend and not a flatterer. For they come to you for the express purpose of receiving chastisement and correction, and on condition that you spare neither the "nail nor the obelisk" in the just exposure of their defects. Act therefore, the part of an upright, and not an unjust,—in other words, of a severe, and not an indulgent censor. What, indeed, could be more inequitable than to deceive a friend who expects you to exercise the most unbounded freedom, in the detection of his errors. Neither am I so fastidiously delicate as to dread the blots and interpolations of a friendly hand; nor, perhaps, can you, or any other person imagine, how little satisfied I am with the compositions in question; how fearful, where I feel the most self-complacency, lest I should be found, as

the poet says, a Suffenus. (*f*) Refuse not then your good offices, I entreat you, on so just and kind an occasion, to one who entertains for you the most friendly regard. *Adieu.*"

Inter Politiani Ep. Lib. i. ep. 4.

Angelus Politianus, to Picus of Mirandula.

"A pleasant conceit this of yours, thus to engage me in a contest with all your LOVES at once; to demand from a person of no wrinkled front, that he should receive so beautiful an assemblage with such sternness and severity! One single Cupid, as report says, could challenge Pan to the palæstra, and give him a fall. (*g*) How then is it possible for me to contend with Venus's whole train? Such, however,

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(*f*) SUFFENUS, a silly poet, who was continually admiring and applauding his own contemptible productions.

"NIMIRUM idem omnes fallimur; neque est quisquam
Quem non in aliquâ re videre Suffenum
Possis. Suus cuique attributus est error;
Sed non videmus manticæ quod in tergo est."
Catulli ad Varum, Epig. 20.

(*g*) PAN et AMOR quondam luctâ certare volentes,
Deponunt calamos ille vel ille sacros;
Hic onus alarum—villosæ nebridos ille,
Projicit hic arcus—projicit ille pedum;
Tum liquido exutos artus perfundit olivo
Cecropiæque modum servat uterque παλης:
Conseruêre manus, totis conatibus ambo,
Robore Pan fidens, dexteritate Puer.
Aspera pugna fuit, primisque assultibus anceps;
Nunc Pana aiebant vincere, nunc Puerum.
At demùm elato prensavit cornua saltu,
Panaque, qui vincit omnia, vicit Amor.

Herculis Strozæ, inter Poet. Illust. Ital. Carm. tom. ix. *p.* 195.

is the task you impose upon me : You, I say, Picus! to whom I can in justice refuse nothing. I entreated therefore, a few of them to suffer my importunities awhile with patience ; not that I assumed the character of a judge, so may I continue to share your friendship, but of Momus merely, who, it is said, found fault with the sandal of Venus, because he could discover no blemish in her person. I have therefore, blotted a few verses ; not because I disapproved of them, but because being of equestrian rank only, they are inferior to the rest, which are of the patrician or senatorial; plebeians I found none: nor with regard to these, believe me, do I apprehend in you a want of judgment, but of inclination merely; you doubtless thought your Naso's countenance more interesting (as they say) with the mole for its foil.

Herewith you will receive them back, accompanied by a stoic attendant, (*h*) whom I wish they may consent to chastise, in such measure only, as the law of retaliation allows; and not make of him an absolute laughing-stock. Be this as it may, the supercilious old gentleman will have sufficient occasion for the exercise of his patience, without challenging

(*h*) Politian's translation of the Enchiridion of Epictetus. —"I intreat you," says Picus in a prior letter, "to send me your Epictetus; as much of your translation of Homer as you have already completed; the verses you have written in your native language relating to Giuliano de' Medici; and all your Latin compositions, on whatever subject. Understand this request as preferred with the most earnest solicitude, since my desire to be possessed of them is of the most impatient kind." *(Vide Ep. ejus inter Epist. Politiani: et oper. Pici, p. 252.)*

Jupiter to shower down misfortunes on his head. Bithus and Bacchius could not be more equally matched. (*i*) The other compositions you ask for, cannot endure the light. Continue to entertain for me that friendship which will ever be returned with reciprocal regard. *Adieu.*"

Pici. oper. p. 245.

Joannes Picus of Mirandula, to Angelus Politianus.

"A politer or more cordial reception, than my LOVES lately met with from you, they confess they never experienced; and even upon the friendly chastisement they received from your hand, they highly congratulate themselves, and present you their acknowledgments; for who, by such a hand, would not gladly consent to perish. In this, however, they find themselves chagrined, that you have handled them with too great indulgence; and even suspect, that LOVE himself hath made you blind to the defects of these LOVES of your friend; a consideration, which, highly as they respect your profound judgment, inclines them to be rather distrustful of it in their own case. They reject such doubts,

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(*i*) BITHUS and BACCHIUS, two celebrated gladiators of equal age and prowess. Hence the proverb, "*Bithus contra Bacchium.*" Thus Horace:

. . . . . "uti non
Compositus meliùs cum Bitho Bacchius."

"Hi cum multos interfecissent, tandem congressi, mutuis vulneribus se confoderunt." (*Car. Stephan. Dict. Histor. &c.*)

however, and begin to struggle with their chains. Impatient of confinement, they are confidently clamorous for liberty, and challenge public scrutiny.

But how shall I describe the jocularity of your own EPICTETUS? O incident truly diverting, and worthy of a smile from Cato! Scarcely had he passed the threshold, when, baring his bosom, behold, says he, the *obeli*, or (if you do not understand Greek) the *sagittæ*. Lo! I stand prepared, if any here is bold enough to retaliate. Who could refrain from laughing, to see the grave old stoic, in so jocular a vein. We abstained, however, from hostilities, as well because he threatened to return blow for blow, as from a conviction that his aged hide was sufficiently callous to defy such feeble strokes as we were capable of inflicting. We therefore received the old gentleman with all due respect; who taking his seat amongst us, commenced a lecture on morals; and that too in the Latin language; not so much because he was addressing natives of Latium; (for there were in the company those who understood Greek) as that through your assistance, he had acquired a wonderful fluency in that language. And so far, I assure you, was he from losing his labour, that before he desisted, he completely converted us all from peripatetics to stoics: nay, so enamoured were we become of his favourite apathy, that you might have seen a company, late of the most delicate irritability, rendered on a sudden of all others the most tolerant: capable of being assailed indeed by others, but hurt only by ourselves; altogether disinclined to struggle with destiny; and, with

regard to things not in our own controul, perfectly resigning our own wills to that of the Gods: never arraigning, never accusing them; never offended; never expostulating with them; incapable of being enslaved or subdued. We became philosophers in action, not merely in profession: suspecting, as becomes noviciates, ourselves as our only adversaries. Careless of the opinion of others, and of every thing of an external nature, we pass them by, with disregard, rather than with contempt. We make provision for the day, as wayfaring men prepare quarters. We occupy these things in fine, we are not occupied with them. We become enamoured of silence, and utter no observation which has not been well digested. To ourselves, we never,—to others, rarely, give occasion to smile. And to comprize EPICTETUS in one word, we have abundantly learned to endure adversity, and to abstain from pleasurable indulgences. Observe, how exactly we have adjusted our lives to the precepts of your own philosopher. Observe, how suddenly in this point, moreover, we are become such thorough stoics, as to charge it on our recollection, that man retrocedes whenever he ceases to advance. If I was surprized to remark such a change in the rest of the audience, much rather was I, to perceive it in myself; who have hitherto been much conversant in the Lyceum, and the Academy; but never in the Portico. For, so much am I overcome by the reasonings of your aged sage, that I am not merely a partial, but an entire convert to his opinions."

The juvenile poems of Picus were not, however, as before observed, destined to sur-

vive to the present day. Their loss is not indeed to be attributed to time or casualty: they perished by the hand that gave them birth. Politian, in a subsequent epistle, makes mention of this circumstance with mingled pleasantry and regret: "I am informed of the fate of your early compositions on amatory subjects, that you have committed them to the flames; delicately apprehensive, perhaps, lest they might injure your own reputation, or the morals of others. For I cannot persuade myself that you destroyed them as Plato is said to have done his, from any notion of their being unworthy the public eye; since as far as my recollection serves me, nothing could be more terse, more melodious, more poetical. As you were wont to term them your LOVES, I lately entertained myself with composing the following Greek epigram upon these little personages, so harshly consigned to the devouring element by your own hands.

Politiani Ep. Lib. i. ep. 7.

ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΙΚΟΝ.

ΠΟΛΛΑΚΙ τοξευθεις φλεχθεις θ' ὑπο Πικος ἐρωτων
Οὐκ ετλη προτερω, παιλα δ' ἀφειλεθ' ὁπλα,
Τοξα, βελη, φαρετρας, και νηησας ταδε παιλα
Ηψεν ὁμου σωρον λαμπασι λιδιοις.
Συν δ' αυτοις μαρψας ἀμενηνα χερυδρια δησεν
Ταις νευραις, μεσση δ' ἐμβαλη πυρκαια.
Και πυρι φλιξε το πυρ, τι δ' ὠ ἀφρονες αυτον ἐρωτες
Τον Πικον μεσων ἐισεπετασθε προμον;

INCENS'D at LOVE's wing'd legion, and the smart
Of many a shaft that has transfix'd his heart,

Bows, quivers, arrows, seizing, PICUS dooms
To vengeful flames, and in one pile consumes.
Yet, more severe, themselves with ruthless bands
The victor binds; he binds their feeble hands.
Heat, heat allays; and fires extinguish fires:
And on his arms each fluttering pow'r expires.
Rash LOVES! thus, thus chastis'd, your folly shews
How dangerous to provoke the PRIDE of every Muse.

With the commencement of the year 1484, the literary career and interesting migrations of Picus become more distinct and conspicuous. Born, as aforesaid, A. D. 1463, he now approached the age of manhood. At this time the classic vales of Arno again attracted his migratory steps; and Florence, rich at once in the rarest treasures of learning, and in the presence of his most valued friends, received with pleasure so desirable an accession to her illustrious academists. One principal object of Picus, amongst others, in this visit to Florence, was to perfect himself in the Greek; as appears from a letter addressed to him by Hieronymus Donatus, (*k*) dated from Venice,

(*k*) HIERONYMUS DONATUS, a Venetian of senatorial rank, united in his own character whatever could adorn the scholar and the gentleman; but the multiplicity of his public engagements left him comparatively but little leisure for the cultivation of letters. He filled with great dignity some of the most conspicuous state employments. He was frequently deputed, either as the representative of the republic, to those cities over which it possessed jurisdiction, or on foreign embassies and missions; in which he never failed to support, in a high degree, the authority, or advance the interests of his country. This is less to be wondered at, since with a well cultivated understanding, great political experience, and a profound knowledge of the interests of the state, he com-

17 *Kal. Januar.* 1484. Speaking, towards the conclusion of this letter, of their common

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bined very elegant manners, and the most captivating address: all which advantages were heightened by a majestic stature and deportment, and every personal accomplishment. *(Jovius in Elogiis.)*

Among a variety of testimonies which might be adduced to illustrate these assertions, that of Antiquarius is more peculiarly apposite to the present occasion. Writing to Politian, at a time when Hieronymus filled a diplomatic character at Milan, on behalf of his republic, "I deem myself peculiarly fortunate" (says he) "in being fated to live in an age in which, men who seem to have descended from heaven for this very purpose, so happily conspire together by their literary exertions, to rescue science from its ruins: insomuch that where the Phœnix Picus, and birds of like happy omen preside, those of a more ignoble kind dare no longer obtrude their obstreperous loquaciousness. I have the singular felicity to be personally acquainted with Hermolaus. I have been delighted with hearing him descant on fate, on chance, on fortune. Subjects, which soar beyond the comprehension of the vulgar, and are generally handled by those of the peripatetic school, with elaborate abstruseness, became, when he spoke, so luminous, so perspicuous, that the whole series of celestial causes seemed like the links of one amazing chain, visibly suspended before his auditory. I remarked with admiration, that enchanting urbanity, that polished address, that intellect actuated as it were by a celestial *afflatus*, which indicated to us the presence of a kind of terrestrial divinity. With Hieronymus my intercourse has not yet been frequent: for though his conversation enriched with the stores of literature, is peculiarly attractive; though I am conscious he is as accessible as a person constantly disposed to acts of benevolence and friendship can be, yet the reserve necessary to the public station I fill, deters me, to my great regret, from availing myself of his ornamental and instructive society to the extent I wish. I take, however, a nearer survey of him, as often as he appears at court; and am charmed with those delightful sallies of wit, which he knows how to temper with the gravity and prudence that may be expected from one destined to fill the highest stations of a powerful republic. But I feel a kind of anxious solicitude, (such as no doubt becomes so insignificant an individual as myself) lest those very men

friend, Hermolaus Barbarus;—"that society of his," says he, "which you so greatly envy

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to whom the Roman tongue owes the restoration of its pristine splendor, should one day become the instruments of vesting the whole dominion of Italy in one single republic. For the Venetians, conscious of the jealousy which their proud spirit and aspiring views have heretofore excited in the neighbouring states, through the haughty language and ostentatious ignorance of former diplomatic characters, have recently adopted a new and wise expedient. They now depute on public embassies, persons of the most conciliating manners, and familiar address. Laying open those lucrative and honourable employments, formerly conferred on the aged only, to young statesmen imbued with the graces of philosophy and erudition, it is incredible how efficaciously they advance their interests. Since, however, empire is dispensed by destiny alone, let me no longer be anxious on this head; but rather congratulate our mutual studies, which have to boast such powerful and distinguished assertors as yourselves." *(Pol. Ep. Lib.* iii. *ep.* 21.*)*

The intercourse between Hieronymus Donatus and Picus of Mirandula, having experienced a temporary interruption, appears to have been revived by a letter from the former; which gave occasion to one from Picus in return, pleasingly declarative of the early accomplishments of Hieronymus. "Your letter," says Picus, "equally fraught with eloquence and erudition, renews in me the recollection of that delight which I formerly received from your conversation when I studied at Padua; as often as opportunity threw in my way a gratification of which I was always eagerly desirous. Nor did I at that time, fail to remark in you a mind endowed by nature with every winning grace; polished by study with every species of erudition; and exuberantly stored with all the virtues."—In charging himself with culpable neglect for omitting to cultivate so interesting a correspondence, Picus adds a remark well worthy of observation.—"But thus" says he, "it is;—thus it too frequently happens to myself. The free and unrestrained practicability of accomplishing those ends which commend themselves to our best wishes, is apt to make us supine and negligent. Whilst we omit today that which we think can easily be performed to-morrow, the year at length revolves, and we still slumber under the drowsy influence of procrastination." He proceeds to thank him for the *stimulus* of his friendly and agreeable letter;

me, know that I value almost as I do your friendship: yours, of whose talents and at-

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and promises to be in future more vigilant in performing the duties of an active correspondent. *(Vide Pici opera, p. 252.)* This letter of Picus also proves, that Hieronymus in his youthful days cultivated poetry with success.—" Your verses," says Picus, " were for a considerable time in my possession when I resided at Padua; and I remember I was highly delighted with the beauty of the thoughts, and the harmonious polish of the composition." But few, however, and those perhaps, the least interesting monuments of the genius of Donatus remain. The verses in question, as well as the poem he composed in praise of Politian, like those of many other contemporary scholars, have unfortunately been involved in the silence of oblivion. *(Vide Miscellanea Polit. Cap.* xc.*)*

Hieronymus Donatus, in the year 1510, was deputed on an embassy to Pope Julius II. and reconciled the republic of Venice to his Holiness. " Attulisse siquidem videtur in omnem actionem mores lectissimos, et præclaris disciplinarum omnium luminibus illustres; quibus postea, Julium Secundum Veneto nomini graviter iratum, et conspirantibus externis Regibus sævo bello Majestatis injuriam vindicantem, non leniverit modò, sed impetratâ pace, ictoque fœdere converterit." *(Jovius in Elog.)* The editors of *Noveau Dictionnaire Histor.* relate (but it appears not on what authority) a *bon mot* of his on this occasion. " The Pope demanding of him by what grant or charter the republic of Venice founded its pretended right to the sovereignty of the Adriatic sea;" Hieronymus replied, " that his Holiness would find it on the back of that instrument by which Constantine III. gave to Pope Sylvester the city of Rome, and the other appendages of the ecclesiastical state." " It was" add our authors, " the worst species of heresy to deny the existence of this pretended instrument; and so late as 1478, some persons were burned at Strasburg for openly doubting of it.

Hieronymus did not live to return from this embassy to Venice. He died at Rome, A. D. 1513. " Monumenta ejus ingenii digna luce, quòd publicis occupationibus absolvi nequiverant, filii suppressêrunt—edito libro adversus Græcos vanissimè de sacrorum principatu cum Romano pontifice contendentes. Legitur etiam Libellus Alexandri Aphrodisei, de Intellectu e Græco in Latinum, puriter ac appositè tra-

tainments I entertain so high an opinion, that I deem nothing so prodigious as to be beyond their reach; especially as I understand your present object at Florence is to perfect yourself in the Greek language. This project of yours I cannot sufficiently extol, for,

"ἡδὲν γλυχυτερον τῃ παν ἐιδεναι."

The same letter gave rise to the correspondence of Donatus and Politian. "Allow me," proceeds the former, "to envy you the society of Politian; a person of such consummate eloquence, of a genius so fertile; whose "Rusticus" I have lately perused. I esteem him the glory of the age, and,

"παν ἐπ' ἀληθειᾳ πεπλασμενον ἐκ Διος ἐρνος."

Make him, I entreat you, such assurances in my name, as could be expected from a person most amicably disposed towards him. I solicit your good offices, to introduce me to his friendship, relying on your obliging disposition, and not unconscious that to be recommended "των Μϐσων καπυρῳ ϛοματι," by a person of your extraordinary erudition, will be greatly for my advantage."

Pici oper. pag. 271.

How effectually Picus acquitted himself in the execution of his friend's commission, we learn from Politian himself. That scholar, never indifferent to the voice of praise, seems

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ductus." *(Jovius ut supra.)* Some letters of his may be found amongst those of Picus and Politian; and Jovius mentions others as extant, but says not where they are to be met with.

to have been more than ordinarily elated by commendations proceeding from a pen so respectable as that of Donatus. Yet he thus affects to disguise his exultation, by a veil of modesty too artificially woven to answer the purpose of concealment: "In a letter of yours to Picus, amongst other things which gave me great pleasure, I am particularly incited to write to you, by the judgment you therein pass upon my "Rusticus:" a judgment which I wish were as true as it is honourable. For my part, I must consider it less as the offspring of your critical sagacity, than as a proof of your good-will for the author. I should estimate my own merits very falsely indeed, were I inclined to measure them rather by the praise of one whose excess of kindness biasses his judgment, than by my own convictions, unless so far under the delusion of what Horace terms the "amabilis insania," common to poets, as never to bring myself to the test, or take a view of my own imperfections." Politiani Ep. Lib. ii. ep. 8. Polit. Ep. Lib. ii. ep. 9.

It may, however, be presumed, that Politian had sufficiently informed himself of the peculiar taste and character of the person to whom he wrote, and whose friendship it was his object to secure. "I already begin to reap" (thus Donatus expresses himself in reply) "the most valuable and agreeable fruits of your amicable regard for me; richer or more honourable I cannot hope to receive from any other quarter. The transcendent erudition with which your letter abounds, is all yours; the result of your own prodigious talents and indefatigable studies: the benevolence it breathes, I owe to the kind offices of Picus. Long since, believe me, you possessed my esteem;

but that connecting intercourse was wanting, which I hope by the medium of epistolary correspondence will henceforward subsist between us. You may possibly recollect on occasion of your own visit to Venice about five years since, reciting to Hermolaus, and to myself (then dejected and wearing the sable garb of grief for a parent and an uncle deceased) those golden verses which you composed on the sacrilegious and bloody assassination of Giuliano de' Medici. Since that time I never hear mention made of men of erudition, without thinking especially and principally of you. Great, as from that period I have ever esteemed you, greater still I more recently find you in your very elegant "Rusticus." Be assured, my regard and goodwill are so deeply rooted that no time can undermine, no violence can shake them. The delightful fruits of our friendship I hope to reap, not only in the perusal of your letters, but occasionally also, of the charming productions of your muse, and as often as I am favoured with such a gratification I shall repeat with peculiar triumph those beautiful lines of Theocritus:

Ep. Lib. iii. ep. 10.

ΤΑΣ μοι πας ἐιη πλειος δομος· ἁτε γαρ ὑπνος
Ουτ ἐαρ, εξαπινας γλυκερωτερον, ἁτε μελισσαις
Ανθεα, οσσον ἐμοι Μωσαι Πολιτιανε φιλαι.

May my roof echo with her dulcet strain!
Nor early spring, nor slumbers gentle chain,
Nor flow'rs mellifluous to the industrious bee,
So grateful, as Politian's song to me."

Within a few months after his arrival at Florence, Picus composed his well known panegyrical *critique* on the Italian poems of Lorenzo de' Medici. It is drawn up in the epistolary form, and addressed to Lorenzo himself. Picus commences with observing, that these elegant compositions, the productions of Lorenzo's juvenile pen, fully approve themselves the legitimate offspring of the Muses and of the Graces, but betray no evidence of the juvenility of their author. "What ear," says he, "is not sensibly delighted by the tuneful connection of your verses, by numbers and measures to which the dancing Graces seem to move? In compositions characterized by harmony so sweetly full, by a modulation so perfect, who cannot distinguish the Muses singing in concert? In a gentility of expression so unaffected,—that sprightly turn of thought,—that wit of attic flavour,—ornaments so natural,—simplicity so admirable, — happy disposition, — sentiments full and pregnant, and drawn from the inmost recesses of philosophy, who can discover the young man? My name, I confess, is not enrolled in the *Album* of criticism, nor would I exalt myself to the censorial chair of a judge of composition; yet if without being suspected of adulation, I might be allowed to speak my genuine sentiments, I would boldly affirm, that there is not one of our ancient writers of vernacular poesy, whom you have not far surpassed."

Vide Pici opera. p. 236.

Afterwards, instituting a special comparison between Lorenzo, and the two confessedly brightest glories of Tuscan song, that had preceded him, Petrarch and Dante; Picus ob-

serves, in general, that respectable critics of that or the preceding age remark in Petrarch a defect in matter and thought; in Dante, an imperfection of language. The former frequently introducing into his poems sentiments of common and trivial origin, possessed nevertheless the art of adorning them with all the glow and colouring of words. Dante, engaged on subjects of the sublimest and most dignified kind, and which naturally led to the introduction of the noblest thoughts uttered by St. Augustin, Aquinas, and other similar authors, in whose writings he was deeply conversant, is yet, frequently harsh and dissonant in his language, and betrays much of the rusticity of a less polished age. Lorenzo, on the contrary, combines all the dignity of thought and nerve of expression found in the one, with the sweetness, polish, and other ornamental graces of style inherent in the other: insomuch, he affirms, that it were difficult to determine, whether in his poems, the subjects derive more ornaments from the language, or the language from the sentiments.

Proceeding to scrutinize more at length the minuter beauties and blemishes discernible in the works of the celebrated fathers of Tuscan poesy, Picus enters into distinct comparisons of their poetical merits, and those of Lorenzo; the result of which is generally in favour of his friend. "They too," he adds, "composed their verses in the shades of retirement, with all the advantages of tranquillity and complete seclusion from public scenes; you, amidst popular tumult, the hurry of a court, the din of the forum, the distractions of care, storms and tempests. To woo the

Muses was their professed and sole employ; to you, an amusement merely. What was their labour, was your respite from fatigue; and in the hours of mental remission, it is your glory to have attained a pitch of excellence, which, by the constant exertion of every nerve of intellect and genius, they have scarcely been able to reach."

Suffice it thus compendiously to have mentioned a piece of criticism which is perhaps better known to later ages, than any other of the works of Picus; especially as, though he assigns reasons for the conclusions he draws, with critical exactness, he has unfortunately omitted to enrich his parallel with passages from the works of the respective authors whose merits he compares. The poetical productions of Petrarch and of Dante indeed still survive, but a great part of those of Lorenzo, are lost; and such as remain, with the exception of a few, brought to light by Mr. Roscoe, in his admirable work, are from their extreme rarity little known. Without assuming such high ground as Picus, Mr. Roscoe has indeed drawn a masterly and interesting character of the poetry of his hero, who will indubitably continue henceforward to maintain his station amongst the highest order of Tuscan poets. Were Lorenzo to live again, can it be doubted whether he would content himself with a seat on Parnassus confessedly so elevated, yet apart from the ranks of invidious competition? As a scholar, as a statesman, as a distinguished friend of science and the arts, as the glorious patron of genius and learning, as one of those few, to whom the world is chiefly indebted for the restoration of letters, he has too many

indisputable claims to immortality, to justify the risking of his fame on a doubtful contest for poetical precedency with Petrarch and Dante. If Lorenzo's personal knowledge of the arts made him respectable, he appears still greater as an encourager of artists: if he was conspicuous for his acquaintance with the languages of Greece and Rome, and for his critical and philosophical attainments, he becomes more an object of our admiration as the founder of academies, and the remunerator of professors. Nor is it otherwise with regard to his poetical qualifications; they were such as might have conferred a portion of fame equal to the ambition of an inferiour man; but it was Lorenzo's high destiny, rather to foster poets by his munificence, to protect them by his influence, (*l*) and to animate them by his example, than to dispute with them the wreath of poetic excellence.

(*i*) To him might justly be applied the words of Horace,

> "Te doctarum hederæ præmia frontium
> Dîs miscent superis."

Politian's apostrophe on another occasion is worthy of Lorenzo, to whom it is more glorious, to derive immortality from the strains of bards whom he cherished, than from his own.

> E tu, ben nato Laur,' sotto il cui velo
> Fiorenza lieta in pace si riposa,
> Nè teme i venti o 'l minacciar del cielo,
> O Giove irato in vista più crucciosa
> Accogli al ombra del tuo santo ostelo
> La voce umil, tremante, e paurosa;
> Principio, e fin, di tutte le mie voglie,
> Che sol vivon d' odor delle tue foglie.

At the close of the same year, Picus addressed a letter to Hermolaus Barbarus, which evinces that his present sojourn at Florence,

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Deh sarà mai che con più alte note,
Se non contrasti al mio voler fortuna,
Lo spirto delle membre, che divote
Ti fur da' fati, insin già dalla cuna,
Risuoni te dai Numidi a Boote,
Dagl' Indi, al mar che 'l nostro ciel imbruna,
E, posto 'l nido in tuo felice ligno,
Di voco augel diventi un bianco cigno?

Nor was this the only occasion on which Lorenzo was complimented under the emblem of a tree whose spreading branches gave shelter to the arts, to science, and to poesy. The following verses, which at least deserve to be ranked among the productions of the minor poets of the day, appear to have been addressed to a person who was engaged in revising the text of the "NOCTES ATTICÆ" of Aulus Gellius. *(Vide Carm. Poetar. Illustr. Ital. tom.* vi.*)*

ALEXII LAPACCINI FLORENTINI, ad CAROLUM ALDOBRANDUM.

DUM nos paterni funeris uberes
Novasque semper, CAROLE, lacrimas
Siccare nequidquam studemus,
Illecebris genialis agri:

Tu, Gellianis Noctibus interim,
Jam vindicatis a carie et situ,
Caliginosæ oblivioni
Eripis, haud sine laude, nomen.

Hæc te laborum tot vigilum manet
Condigna merces, hæc tibi præmia
Debentur! evades labantis,
Perniciem, moriturus, ævi.

Quamvis nec O! te, LAURE! superstite
Sit defuturus nunc honor artibus
Sacrisque sortitis patronum
Vatibus, et meliora sæcla.

whilst of a literary, was but of a temporary nature. "The works which you desire to have," says Picus, "shall be sent as soon as

Pici oper. pag. 260.

Agnovit in Te nomen et os avi
Urbs nostra, tanti vindicis immemor
Futura nunquam; agnoscet olim
Tempora per te eadem beata.

At Nos, et agro non inamabili
Atque his serenis, Carole, Noctibus
Solabimur longas paterni
Intereà tumuli querelas.

While o'er an honour'd Parent's bier
We ceaseless shed the filial tear,
And in these green retreats in vain,
Would soothe the memory of our pain;

You from the sullied Gellian page
Deterge the rust of cankering age;
And teach the illumin'd Attic line
With all its pristine grace to shine.

As thus his "Vigils" you renew,
Lo! fame prepares a wreathe for you;
And bids, though destin'd to the tomb,
Your brow with deathless honours bloom.

Reclin'd beneath our Laurel's shade,—
Oh! might that laurel never fade!
Ev'n now, the artist, critic, bard,
Nor fears neglect, nor doubts reward.

In thee, Lorenzo! proud we view
Thy grandsire's virtues beam anew;
And blest through thee, a future race
The kindred lineaments shall trace.

Meantime amid this rural scene,
Thy Gellius, with his "Nights" serene,
Our solac'd thoughts shall kindly turn
From sorrow, and a father's urn.

I return to my own library; at present I am employed in exploring the literary collections of others. Nor have I any cause to regret my journey, so many treatises have I found at Florence, both Greek and Latin, which are highly interesting to polite literature, and philosophical erudition." About the same time Picus appears to have acquired a new correspondent in the person of Alexander Cortesius, who had written to him a letter, conceived in very handsome terms, for the double purpose of soliciting his friendship, and obtaining from him a copy of his *Critique* on the poems of Lorenzo, which had already excited so much attention amongst the learned as to become an interesting subject of curiosity. Thus much may be inferred from the answer of Picus which is yet extant. Notwithstanding the enquirer into the literary history of this period cannot but be familiarized with the praises of Picus which flow so copiously from the pens of all those scholars who maintained an epistolary intercourse with him, yet the florid panegyric contained in a subsequent letter of Alexander Cortesius will scarcely be perused by him without emotions of surprize. "At no time of my life," says Cortesius, on this occasion, "have I experienced greater pleasure than of late, on receiving your letters. Highly as I had conceived of you, you have, I acknowledge, surpassed my expectations: so surpassed them, that I think your celebrity, far and widely as it is diffused, is yet confined within too narrow bounds. Let us discuss this point with frankness, flattery apart, which is utterly incompatible with noble minds. What is there in you that is

Pici oper. pag. 271.

Pici oper. pag. 259.

Pici oper. pag. 271.

not extraordinary? what that commands not admiration? How many qualifications, that would separately suffice to render a man illustrious, are combined in your person. From every individual, you have, if I may so speak, purloined his peculiar excellency; and though your progenitors attained that pitch of greatness, which could scarce be expected from any but your descendants, yet such are your accomplishments, that the splendour you reflect on them exceeds that which they have transmitted to you. With others, respect and authority are the meed of old age; but youth enhances your dignity. Those difficulties which others surmount by time, you overleap by your own invincible energies. Your talents are, in my estimation, beyond all parallel; and while I search the Grecian eulogists, I find nothing equal to your praise. At most we may imagine, but cannot hope to behold your like. Let the learned allow me to say it without offence,—Picus singly far surpasses them all. Picus, on whom nature hath been so lavish of her endowments, that she may justly stand amazed at the effects of her own prodigality."

After proceeding in the same elevated style of panegyric, Cortesius concludes his letter with the following exclamation: Oh! who will transport me into the midst of your academy,

"—, et ingenti ramorum conteget umbrâ?"

especially,

"Quod cœlum hoc Mars solus habet, non ullus aratro
Dignus honos; squallent abductis arva colonis,
Et curvæ rigidum falces vertuntur in ensem."

"But a truce with these graver thoughts. Do you out of the preceding "*quisquiliæ*" gather the proofs of my attachment, and instead of slighting, consent to return it? I will transmit to you my sentiments concerning your panegyric on Lorenzo, from home, as soon after my arrival there, as leisure will permit."

Early in the ensuing spring, (April, 1485) Hermolaus Barbarus writes to Picus, who still prosecuted his Greek studies at Florence. After apologizing for a silence of some length, Hermolaus proceeds to thank his youthful friend for the flattering proofs of affection, and honourable encomiums of his talents and literary productions, which are so predominant in all the letters written by Picus, either to himself, or other Venetian scholars. But the letter in question derives its chief importance from its having given rise to that ingenious defence of the SCHOLASTIC WRITERS, which Picus subsequently composed. A production which, whether it be considered in a serious light, or simply as a playful effort of his pen, and a mere academical exercise of ingenuity, is certainly the most interesting of all his juvenile, and indeed to modern readers, of any other of his compositions that remain; and furnishes a surprising testimony of his extensive reading, exuberance of wit, versatility of talents, rapidity of invention, and the facility with which he wrote on any subject that employed his thoughts.

"What you wrote," continues Hermolaus, "to our friend, and desired him to communicate to me, respecting the plan of your present studies, afforded us both the highest

pleasure. I congratulated our age on the possession of a nobleman, who, whilst his attainments are such, that he is scarcely ignorant of any thing, is yet as indefatigable in his application, as if he had every thing to learn. I see you already an excellent poet, and a consummate orator. I observe you, previously versed in the aristotelic philosophy, now become a proficient in the platonic. As to Greek literature, the only department of science in which you were deficient, and without which your other attainments would be nugatory, I perceive you have not only acquired, but exhausted it: this too, with such ease and celerity, that you can scarcely persuade either yourself or others that you were ever a stranger to it. I might exhort you to persevere with undiminished ardour in the study of the Greek, until it becomes as familiar to you as the Latin; but to you, such exhortations are superfluous; and, in reality, it is but wasting words to give advice to those who are wiser than ourselves. One thing I am sure you are aware of, that no writer in any of the past ages has left the least specimen of pure and correct Latinity, who was unimbued with Grecian lore. For indeed, I cannot think of classing in the rank of Latin authors those Germans and Teutonics, whose writings, never studied to any useful purpose, are now happily forgotten, or if perused in our day, perused to the torture and reproach of their admirers. They are no less deservedly, than generally condemned, as a tribe of barbarians, and loaded with appellations far more disgraceful than oblivion itself. Some good things, it may be urged, they have said; and

some of them were by no means destitute of genius, learning, and other estimable qualifications. I shall not at present attempt to disprove this; though I am not prepared to admit it. But is it not a polished and elegant, at least a classical and chaste style, which confers immortal reputation on an author? And some even of the christian writers, both in the Greek and Latin languages are not deficient in this respect. Unless indeed a painter, a statuary, or other artist is to be praised, merely because the materials he works upon are costly and valuable. Unless Chærilus and Mævius, if they had handled the same subjects as Virgil and Homer, ought, on that account, to have been placed by all critics in the rank of poets. Surely, Chærilus and Mævius, on whatever topics they had written, would still have been Chærilus and Mævius; nor would the former have ever produced the Iliad; the latter the Æneid, or *vice versâ*. Excuse these jests upon such truly ridiculous and contemptible personages, who have already led me too far from my subject. But to return. You no longer embrace Greek literature as a scholar, but as a professor, nor can any other person, in whatsoever walk of science, more honourably, or more fully verify the well known adage,

"multos discipulos meliores esse præceptoribus:"

or, as it is better expressed in the Greek iambic,

"πολλοι μαθηται κρειττονες διδασκαλων."

Joannes Picus Mirandula, to Hermolaus Barbarus.

Pici oper. p. 238.

"I can no more forbear to express, my dear Hermolaus, on all suitable occasions, than I can to conceive such sentiments of you, as I am bound to form of a person in whom so many individual excellencies are united. Would I possessed a reach of conception more adequate to your merits, and a strength and flow of language to do them more ample justice. Politian and I have repeatedly perused those letters with which you have favoured ourselves and others; and so does each, successively, vie with the preceding; so many new beauties unfold themselves as we read; that we scarcely find a momentary interval to breathe from our exclamations of applause. I have indeed, felt the force of that eloquence which enables you so powerfully to move and persuade at pleasure, on various former occasions; but never more sensibly than in your last letter; in which you are so severe upon a certain description of philosophers. Be assured this censure of yours had its due weight. I was filled with regret and confusion, on a retrospect of my own studies. Six whole years have I been conversant with these very barbarians. Better, I exclaimed, to have been totally idle, than thus laboriously employed to no purpose. Why have I thus lavished upon Aquinas, Scotus, Albertus, Averröes, the flower of my age! the midnight oil! Doubtless, so much time and labour bestowed upon good authors would have produced the happiest fruits.

Yet, thought I, desirous of consoling myself, were any of them to come again from the shades, is it possible that men so dexterous in argument should have absolutely nothing to say in their own defence. Perhaps one of the more fluent among them, defending his own barbarism, as little like a barbarian as possible, might address you to the following effect.

WE HAVE LIVED renowned, Hermolaus! and shall still live: not in the schools of grammarians and pedagogues, but in the circles of philosophers; the assemblies of the wise, where the question is not concerning the mother of Andromache, or Niobe's children, and similar trifles; but the investigation of realities human and divine. In reasoning upon, in tracing, in unravelling these intricacies, we might perhaps betray a wrinkled austerity somewhat forbidding; if it is possible to be too anxious, or too serious in the search after truth. But in this search, who shall convict us of dulness or stupidity? Let him come forward, and enter the lists with us. He shall soon find that Mercury inspired the intellects, if not the tongues of barbarians; that if destitute of eloquence, they were not devoid of wisdom. That they combined not these qualities, is perhaps so far from being a crime, that such a combination would itself be criminal. Who condemns not paint, or studied ornament, in a virgin adorned with native charms? In a vestal, who would not detest them? So widely differ the offices of the orator and the philosopher, that nothing can be more dissimilar. What are the views of the rhetorician?—To lie,—to deceive,—to circum-

vent,—to infatuate,—to give to falsehood the semblance of truth, or that of truth to falsehood. Eloquence enables you at pleasure to exalt or degrade, to amplify or extenuate, by a species of magic to transform things into whatever shape you please; and though, in reality, truth can undergo no change, it appears to your audience what you choose to represent it. Behold the extent of your art! an art of fiction, imposture, and deception: always occupied in magnifying or diminishing objects beyond reality; masking truth by an artificial colouring of words; cajoling, in order to mislead the judgment of mankind.

What affinity is there between such men and the philosopher, whose sole business is the discovery and demonstration of truth? In him, an affectation of verbal ornaments, by implying a distrust of the reasons which he adduces, would tend to lessen their credit and authority. Far be it from us to rely on such arts in order to gain disciples. We treat sacred subjects with rusticity, in preference to studied ornament; convinced that nothing can be more unbecoming or detrimental, than to write or speak in this elaborate style on topics connected with the investigation of truth. Such language may be adapted to the forum, but consists not with enquiries into nature, or celestial speculations. It belongs not to the *academe*, but to the tribune; where words and facts are weighed by popular estimation, by those who value leaves and blossoms more than fruits.

You are not ignorant that every garb suits not every character. Allowing this eloquence of yours to be ornamental, engaging,

attractive in itself ; yet in a philosopher it were neither consistent nor pleasing. A light and airy step, studied gestures, languishing looks, none would disapprove in an opera-dancer or a stage-player ; but who would not remark them in a philosopher with disgust and aversion ? Graceful vivacity, and infantile loquaciousness, are qualities which in a young maiden we caress and admire ; but in a matron, we should assuredly condemn them, as affected and incongruous. Not to us therefore, attaches the charge of folly, but to those who celebrate the orgies of Bacchus in the temple of Vesta ; who degrade the gravity and decorum of philosophical subjects with ludicrous quibbles, and flourishes of rhetoric. The remark of Sinesius concerning a young man may justly be applied to style ; when overcharged with ornament it is of a suspicious character. We had rather ours should be rude and unpolished, than be thought to disguise under specious decorations some defect or impurity ; lest, instead of commanding the reverence due to Minerva's robe, it should be repelled, as profane, from assisting at her sacred rites.

In a word, nothing can be more foreign, in all respects, from the maxims of a philosopher, than that which savours of pomp and luxury. Socrates observed, that Sycionian slippers were neatly made, and became the foot extremely well ; but were not fit for Socrates. The habits of the philosopher, and the man of the world, differ with regard both to diet and conversation. The former adapts these things to his necessities merely ; the latter to the advancement of his secular interests,

as to which, if the one were regardless, he would cease to be a man of the world; if the other were affectedly solicitous, he would be no philosopher. If Pythagoras could have subsisted without food, he would have abstained from herbs and roots: if he could have communicated his thoughts by looks, or otherwise than by discourse, he would not have spoken at all; much less was he inclined to study elegance of language. Let us not disguise the viands which we place before our guests, with such tempting and artificial sauces, as that content to feed on the outside, they shall neglect to taste of the marrow and juices. How often do we observe those, who have sinister ends to serve, amusing their hearers with pomp and sound, while all is, in reality, mere emptiness. Should the philosopher do so, Musonius will exclaim, this is not the voice of the philosopher, but the mere whistle of the flute-player.

Blame us not for omitting to do what we could not have done innocently. We are solicitous what, and not how, we write. We are solicitous indeed, how. We would avoid all pomp, and flowers of oratory; we seek not to recommend our matter by wit or elegance. Let our manner be useful, be grave, be venerable. Let it rather derive authority from the dignity of the subject, than commendation from frippery of style. We desire not the plaudits of the theatre; that the rotundity or smoothness of our periods may captivate the ear. Wit and humour are not our object. Grant us rather the silent admiration of those few, who are capable of examining and comprehending truths, extracted from the secret

recesses of nature, or brought down from Jove's high palace for the cognisance of men. Grant us the praise of detecting falsehood so clearly, that it can no longer be defended; of defending truth so ably, that it can no longer called in question. Grant us the praise of sagacity in research; exactness in enquiry; subtilty in speculation; gravity in judging; dexterity in entangling an opponent, or in extricating ourselves. Allow us brevity of style; pregnant, notwithstanding, with multifarious and weighty matter; obvious expressions; but meanings most extensive and profound; pages replete with the most important questions and solutions; skill and tried experience in determining ambiguities; solving difficulties; evolving intricacies; and by the most convincing syllogisms invalidating falsehoods, and establishing truths. By such pretensions, Hermolaus, we vindicate our fame from oblivion, and despair not of still vindicating it through every succeeding age.

We are pronounced, you say, by the many unpolished and uncouth. We deem this rather an honour than a disgrace. We wrote not for them, but for you, and such as you. As the ancients, by the veil of enigma and fable, deterred unlearned persons from their mysteries, so we, by an external of harsh and unpalatable terms, have been wont to scare from our festivals those who would only pollute them. Thus they who would conceal a treasure, if they cannot otherwise withdraw it from public view, do not scruple to cover it with sweepings and rubbish, in order to hide it from unworthy eyes. No less careful is the philosopher to disguise his speculations from

the vulgar; who, incapable of appreciating, can do them no honour by their praises. Consequently, it would be a degrading species of deference to such, to intermingle in his writings any thing calculated for ostentation, or to catch the popular gale.

Our discourses resemble the "Sileni" of our own Alcibiades. Those statues, externally fierce, squallid and disgusting, were filled within with jewels, and other articles of the most rare and valuable kind. Regarding our exteriour, you perceive nothing but the monster; but if you look within, the monster becomes a god. But our ears, you will say, cannot endure this harsh, disjointed arrangement; these barbarous terms, formidable in their very sound. Fastidious man! when you attend a concert of music, resign yourself wholly to the pleasures of the ear; when the schools of philosophers, abstract yourself from sense, and retire into the inmost recesses of your mind. Assume those ears of Thyaneus, wherewith, disencumbered of the body, he was enabled to distinguish, not terrestrial Marsyas, but the divine Apollo himself, attuning his celestial lyre to music of the spheres, ineffably harmonious. With such ears could you listen to the discourses of philosophers, not Nestor's words should equal theirs in sweetness. But to reason more familiarly; when the philosopher is occupied in the most subtle disquisitions, to loathe some inelegancies in his diction, betrays less a delicate stomach than one unaccustomed to such banquets. It is as if one should be offended with Socrates, when delivering precepts of morality, because the latchet of his shoe were loose, or

his robe sate ungracefully. It were to quarrel about the paring of a nail:

"Ac si sectum pravè stomachetur ob unguem." Horat.

Cicero requires not eloquence in a philosopher, but merely an ability to comprehend and do justice to his subject. That writer, equally learned and discreet, knew that it is incumbent on us to regulate the thoughts, rather than diction; to guard more against aberration of judgment, than of words: that our concern is rather with the "λογος ἐν διαθεσει," than that "ἐν προφορᾳ:" that it becomes us to have the muses, not so much on our lips, as within our bosoms; lest the tones of the soul, rendered harsh by anger, or enfeebled by concupiscence, lose any thing of their genuine and justly attempered harmony.

Plato banished poets from his commonwealth as tending, by the luxuriancy of their compositions, to enervate the mind; and gave the direction of it to philosophers. These likewise he would doubtless have banished, had he found them disputing in the meretricious style of poets. You appeal perhaps, to Lucretius, who observes, that though philosophical treatises stand in no need of verbal ornament, yet flowery language serves agreeably to disguise the austerity of their precepts: so, though wormwood were itself sufficient for the cure of a disease, we yet mingle honey with it;

"Ut puerorum ætas improvida ludificetur."

Your reasoning, Lucretius! might be admissible, if you wrote indeed for children: if admissible with regard to others, much more

with regard to you, who present them with a vessel, not merely of wormwood, but of the rankest poison. But the case is widely different with us, who seek not to allure the vulgar, but to deter them: who offer not a draught of wormwood, but of nectar. But Lactantius, you say, contends that truth, combining with its native force the embellishments of oratory, makes a more powerful impression on the minds even of aged and grave, as well as youthful hearers. Had you, Lactantius, been more conversant in sacred literature, and less in fabulous disputation, far from supporting, you would with us have opposed this opinion. What can more strongly move, more powerfully persuade than the holy scriptures? I should rather have said, they agitate, they constrain, they take us by force. Plain are the words; familiar the expressions; yet lively, quick, and fervid; penetrating the most secret recesses of the heart, and with miraculous efficacy transforming the whole man. With the beautiful and elaborate orations of Pericles, I am comparatively little affected, said Alcibiades, but the natural and unadorned language of Socrates kindles me to enthusiasm, transports me beyond myself, and compels my assent and obedience.

Not to multiply arguments in defence of a truth so obvious; if a hearer is in his senses, what can he expect but treachery from language so highly coloured? Three things tend powerfully to persuade; the life of the speaker, the truth and importance of the subject, and seriousness of address. A philosopher, Lactantius, needs no other recommendation of his precepts, if his moral conduct be pure, if

he speak the truth, if he utter it in a language derived not from the bowers of the muses, but from that frowning cavern in which Heraclitus said truth lies concealed.

But, exclaims another opponent, let us candidly examine this position. Wisdom, a quality which of itself commands our reverence and attention, stands in no absolute need, we grant, of adventitious ornament. Yet why not admit the accession of ornament; since those things which are engaging in themselves become still more so by being decorated and adorned. True; yet in many cases this maxim is inadmissible. There are things, the lustre of which would be rather obscured than heightened by any accession; and which are in their own nature so perfect, that any change or variation would be detrimental. A palace of marble admits not of paint; should you whitewash it, you detract from its magnificence and beauty. So wisdom, so philosophical subjects are not illustrated, but obscured, by such decorations. It is a known maxim, that a beautiful face is not improved by paint. Superadded charms frequently conceal what lies beneath, and exhibit only what they bring: if then the original are superior to the adventitious, they gain not, but lose by the accession. Hence philosophy presents herself unadorned; obvious to sight, nor dreading inspection, she appeals to the understanding; conscious that she is free from all deformity. She rejects a disguise, which, in proportion as it were applied, would detract from her beauty and her praise. Simple in her very essence, any admixture would vitiate and change her nature. Her properties, like those of the ma-

thematical point, are unity and indivisibility. The playful metaphor, the swelling hyperbole, the luxuriating comparison, and similar factitious ornaments would not only offend her gravity, but be productive of criminal addition, diminution or change.

Thus far then, say you, accept our concession: admitting that your language should be unadorned, let it at least savour of classical latinity; though not flowery, let it be consistent with propriety; though unsolicitous to please by selection and arrangement, let it not offend by disgusting negligence and preternatural deformity. It is well; we have already made great progress towards your conversion. But inform me, I entreat you, what is this latinity, on the neglect of which you ground your only remaining charge against us? Should it, for instance, occur in argument, "a sole hominem produci," our party will say, "causari hominem:" this is not Latin, you exclaim; admitted: it is not classically spoken; be it so: consequently erroneously; here you argument fails. An Arabian, or an Egyptian shall express the same idea, each in a different language, but this difference does not affect its truth. Words are either the creations of pleasure, or they are founded on the nature of things. If merely accidental, and deriving their fitness from the common consent of any particular society of persons, why is not the phraseology which these philosophers, whom you term barbarians, have agreed to sanction, entitled to equal respect with the Roman? With what semblance of reason do you call theirs wrong, and yours right, if the imposition of names be thus altogether arbitrary?

If it merits not the appellation of Latin, you are at liberty to call it French, British, Spanish,—what you please. In conversing with you, they will in some particulars excite your ridicule, and in others be unintelligible. The same thing will happen to you in addressing them: "Αναχαρσις παρ' Αθεναιοις σολοικιζει, Αθεναιοι δε παρα Σκυθαις—Anacharsis commits solecisms among Athenians;—Athenians among Scythians." But if the propriety of words depends on the nature of the things which they denote, whom will you consult on this head; the rhetorician, or the philosopher, who alone is versed in the nature of the things in question? What the ear rejects as harsh, reason perhaps approves as peculiarly appropriate and significant. Yet why introduce these innovations upon what may be termed vernacular latinity? Occupied, Hermolaus! in developing the laws of the universe, or in tracing the minutest operations of nature, they could not at the same time be studying in Cicero, Pliny, or Apuleius, the graces and proprieties of language. Their inquiry was, not what the Roman idiom, but what nature admits of or abhors.

But let us grant for a moment in your favour, the expediency of a close connection between wisdom and eloquence; who is guilty of disuniting them? Not merely philosophers; but historians, rhetoricians, poets; so Philostratus complains. Yet the latter shall survive to immortal praise; the former only to obloquy and contempt! Inconclusive reasoner! beware! Cicero prefers discretion, though stammering and hesitating, to words at will, without it. We ask not so much whose image

a coin bears, as of what metal it consists; and who would not prefer pure gold from a barbarian, to base metal from a Roman mint? If it were a crime to separate good sense from eloquence, what shall we say of those who abounding in the latter, are entirely destitute of the former? Such, to use the phrase of Cato, are "mera mortuaria glossaria." To exist without a tongue, under some inconveniences, were possible; but not without a heart. If he who is unimbued with polite literature, is little better than a barbarian; he that is destitute of philosophy, is less than man. Prudence totally devoid of eloquence, may be beneficial; eloquence without prudence, like a sword in the hand of a maniac, cannot but be mischievous.

Then, a piece of sculpture is praised for the materials, not the workmanship. Then, if Chærilus had handled the same subject with Homer; Mævius with Virgil; they must have been entitled to an equal rank with them as poets. — Your similitude is defective, and cannot apply. Our assertion, as well as yours, is, that things are to be estimated "a specie, non a subjecto;" by the form, and not the matter. By the quality or species, things are what they are; but one species confers a title to the name of philosopher; another, to that of poet. Let Lucretius write of nature, of God, of providence: let Scotus, or some other of us, do the same; and let him write in verse, to expose himself the more. The first principles of Lucretius shall be atoms and a vacuum: his deity corporeal, ignorant and regardless of human affairs: his universe regulated and kept in motion by the mere for-

tuitous justling of corpuscles: but his latinity, beyond all question pure and elegant. To natural substances Scotus shall ascribe their proper essence and qualities: God, he will tell you, is a separate mind; knowing all things; superintending all things; yet so superintending the least, as well as the greatest, that his own tranquillity remains undisturbed; and agreeably to the common phrase, "καλιονλα μη καλιεναι:" yet all this, in a language so rude and unpolished, as not to merit the name of Latin. Will it be difficult to determine which of these is the best poet; which the best philosopher? Beyond all controversy, Scotus as much excels in the propriety of his reasoning, as Lucretius in the elegance of his language. But mark the difference: the imperfection of the one, is that of the lips; of the other, that of the judgment. The one betrays ignorance of the laws of poesy, possibly of grammar; the other, of God and nature. The one, rude of speech, has thoughts that cannot be sufficiently applauded; the other, in a strain of consummate eloquence, utters doctrines of the most impious and most dangerous tendency."

These, or much more ingenious arguments, our barbarian, my dear Hermolaus! might probably urge in defence of his own barbarism. Not that I fully subscribe, or pretend that every gentleman and scholar is bound to subscribe to his opinion. I have taken up perhaps the worst side of the argument, as a trial of skill. Plato's Glauco defended injustice not from conviction; but to stimulate Socrates to the praise of its opposite. I likewise, hoping to hear you plead the cause

of eloquence, have inveighed against it in terms rather beyond what my feelings and judgment approve. Had I deemed the study of eloquence contemptible in comparison with that of these barbarians, I should not have almost wholly deserted the latter for the former. I should not apply with my present ardour to Greek literature; to the perusal of your "Themistius," a work which cannot be sufficiently commended. But allow me to say, I confess myself provoked at our modern *grammaticasters*, men, who if they can trace two words only to their origin, fancy that all learning centres in themselves, and affect to speak of our moral writers with contempt. Away! say they, with these philosophers of yours; we would have nothing to do with them. No wonder! "Nec Falernum canes."

But to conclude this epistle; if our barbarians have obtained deserved celebrity from the simple knowledge of things; who shall take upon him to define what portion of honour and praise ought to satisfy your just claims; who amongst philosophers are the most eloquent; amongst the eloquent, to express myself by a Greek phrase, "*φιλοσοφωτατος*." *Adieu. Florentiæ: Non. Jun.* 1485."

Pici oper. p. 267, et inter ep. Politiani

Hermolaus did not fail to reply to this amicable challenge of his friend, in a letter equally elaborate and argumentative; though less adorned with the flowers of elocution than the preceding. "I was not," says he, "without expectation of becoming a gainer by the letter which I lately addressed to you; but you have indeed repaid me with a species of interest as far exceeding my expectations, as it is greater than that allowed by law. Instead of a letter

I receive a volume. How can I sufficiently express the pleasure I feel on perceiving that notwithstanding the closeness of your application to your studies, you find leisure for, and gratification in the perusal of my letters. Of this I can have no difficulty in persuading myself; since the most minute and trivial expressions they contain, do not escape your attention. I happened to drop a few hasty and merely accidental remarks, respecting a certain class of barbarian philosophers of modern standing; and although you are yourself hostile to them, and avowedly no longer of their party, you seek to involve me in an old, and already much agitated controversy with them. What an elaborate, learned, and elegant declamation is yours! yet composed with such rapidity, that if I had not been previously well acquainted with your talents, I should have said you had written it long ago, and kept it by you, waiting an opportunity of bringing it forward. But what both delights and entertains me most, is not only that Picus, the genteel, the accomplished, the classical Picus, defends barbarians against Barbarus; but a foe pretends to combat for a foe; an ally against an ally; Picus against himself. I am perfectly charmed with the deduction of two plain inferences; first, that you have inflicted a most deadly wound in the sides of those whom you affect to defend, in having shewn that it is only by eloquence, that the enemies of eloquence could have hoped to be defended: and secondly, that as they are incapable of being defended even by Picus himself, their case is manifestly desperate, and beyond the power of remedy."

"I am informed," continues Hermolaus, "by certain of my Paduan friends, that your apology, which already begins to be inscribed "Scytharum et Teutonum;" in other words, "Typhonis et Eumenidum Laudatio;" has occasioned no little chagrin to the greater part of those whom you defend, and that a variety of constructions are put upon it. To our own party, with whom you are at variance in words, but agree in sentiments, you have performed a most acceptable service; since we are well aware of its scope and tendency. Justly indeed, might I charge you as a deserter, if your real sentiments were not in unison with the elegant character of your composition. Yet, for the sake of a jest, allow me to observe, you cannot be altogether acquitted of tergiversation, in thus playing a double game; and wounding the cause which you patronise, by your mode of advocating it. If you betray your clients, what difference does the manner make in the treason? Nay, what scheme could have been more treacherously devised, than to defend by the highest efforts of eloquence, those who are confessedly most at variance with eloquence, and most obnoxious to it? and that too by arguments which the very persons whose cause you plead would very easily confute, provided they were endued with capacities to comprehend you. But alas! at a composition so polished as yours, which dazzles their sight with the brilliancy of so many metaphors; at sentiments so pointed; historical allusions so multifarious; at all those flowers of the most recondite erudition; the least *asinine* among them; I would say, the least "ἀμεσοι," can barely move their ears!

The rest fly out of hearing; they disclaim, they abjure them."(*m*)

(*m*) Hermolaus puts the remainder of his reply into the mouth of one of these Paduan students, who somewhat more sagacious than the rest of his tribe, is made to suspect the sincerity of Pico's intentions; and consequently protests at considerable length, equally against his officious zeal for their cause, and his mode of defending it; and at length concludes with this declaration, "Malumus causa tota cadere quam per te servari, &c." In this particular, perhaps the correspondent of Picus has a further view of holding up to designed ridicule the academists of Padua, as distinguished from those of other similar institutions in Italy, by an obstinate attachment to the study of the scholastic writers, in preference to those classic models which lead to the formation of a purer style, and a more elegant taste.

In allusion to this epistle of Picus, Politian writing to Bernardus Riccius, one of his correspondents then resident at Milan, observes, "You inform me that many in your circles take offence at my speaking so highly of the extensive erudition of Joannes Picus of Mirandula, and his zeal in the pursuit of letters; and are unwilling to allow his compositions the praise of eloquence. You desire to be favoured with a letter, or any other short production of his pen, to carry about with you and shew as occasion may require; that the vindication of his fame may not rest merely either on your assertion, or my testimony. Willing to oblige you, I have transcribed and sent a letter of Picus, wherein he defends a certain class of philosophers against Hermolaus Barbarus; and with it the ingenious answer of the latter, that you may have an opportunity of contrasting the style and manner of each. From this letter you will be able to form some estimate of the talents of Picus; yet it is to measure, as the Greek proverb says, "Leonem ab unguibus." He is indeed in the constant habit of writing largely on one important subject or another; as his works daily maturing for publication, will hereafter convince the world; yet now and then he condescends to exercise his pen on these lighter subjects. This very letter, so full, so pointed, so rich in argument, was in a manner the extemporaneous production of a few morning hours. Yet you will discover in it select expressions, a style truly classic, attic simplicity, close arrangement, roundness of period, an agreeable conciseness, a sprightly glow of colouring, yet perfectly chaste and void

The year 1485 began to draw near its close, before Picus took his leave of the Florentine academy. Previously however to his departure from Florence, Philippus Beroaldus appears to have addressed to him a friendly letter, which was accompanied by some poetical compositions of his own. In return for these, he requests to be favoured with a similar mark of confidence on the part of Picus; something which he might peruse himself, or communicate to the *literati* of Bologna, with the most incontrovertible assurance of its being the genuine offspring of his pen: for the same ardent curiosity respecting our youthful prodigy, which we have seen existing in other literary circles, had also been excited amongst the academists of the above-mentioned city. Beroaldus, who was a frequent correspondent of Picus, and makes a conspicuous figure amongst the scholars of this age, was a native of Bologna; where he first saw the light A. D. 1453. He was, in his infancy, deprived of his father; consequently, the superintendance of his education devolved upon his mother Castorea, whose affection and care Philippus

Pici oper. pag. 236.

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of extravagant or affected ornament, happy metaphor, acute reasoning, appropriate elucidation, strong and convincing argument, solidity of judgment, accurate discrimination, uncommon force, ingenuity and dignity. Nevertheless, as Cicero on some occasion remarks, mankind are extremely unwilling to acknowledge a variety of excellencies in any individual. Picus, who has given such repeated and convincing proofs of eminence in the career of letters, and stood forward so often in their defence, great as his eloquence assuredly is, has been denied the solitary praise of a polished and elegant style. But the days to come, as Pindar says, shall pronounce a juster judgment." *(Politiani Epist. Lib. ix. ep. 2.)*

remunerated, to the latest moment of her life, with great filial piety and gratitude. Nature had bestowed upon Beroaldus a remarkable docility of disposition, an agreeable person, and a pleasing elocution ; together with a singularly retentive memory, which he further improved by assiduous reading, and the practice of teaching After the usual course of grammatical studies, he became a diligent hearer of Franciscus Puteolanus, a professor and poet of some eminence for those times. He was soon, himself, called to the professor's chair; first at Parma, afterwards at the university of Paris ; where he was attended by a numerous auditory. At length, invited back in the most honourable and flattering manner, to his native city, he continued to exercise his learned functions there, until the termination of his life. with great eminence and continually increasing celebrity. (*n*)

(*n*) " Scholam ejus clari genere fortunisque viri frequentârunt; ad quem audiendum undique ex longinquis regionibus confluebant."

" Profitebatur autem horâ diei ferè tertiâ, frequenti audientium turbâ. Pronuntiabat dulci clarâque voce, ac jucundâ et ad auditum accommodatâ, rectâ facie, nec minus decoro corporis motu ac decenti actu. In elucidandis verò scriptorum sensibus, tantâ ingenii dexteritate usus est, ut omnibus pariter audientibus satisfecerit semper. Adeòque magna in literis ejus fuit authoritas, ut non ab homine sed a Deo responsa dari viderentur. Hujus viri inter multa egregia, et istud memorabile fuit, quod indefessus a manè ad vesperas, post publicas lectiones, privatas etiam tum legebat. Me quidem adolescentulo, memoriâ repeto, singulis diebus novem lectiones legere solitum : nec unquam de mercedibus pactus est, eoque plura ex liberalitate discentium consecutus. Hunc quæstum sine crimine sordium fecit; quia tunc temporis res familiaris ad usus necessarios, non homini ad plenum suppetebat. Sic etiam Socrates, quasi quidam philosophorum

At this period, the family of the Bentivoglj, which had long been distinguished for its opulence and splendour, seems to have enjoyed no less power and precedency at Bologna, than that of the Medici at Florence. Giovanni Bentivoglio, then the chief of this illustrious house, who had connected himself either by affinity or friendship with most of the princes of Italy, honoured Beroaldus with his special patronage, and with the tuition of Annibale, his son, and the intended heir of his fortunes and dignity. With a nobleman and senator, whom he introduces in his writings, by the classical name of "Minus Roscius," (*o*) a person of great learning and taste, as well as

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Deus,—sic Chrysippus, sic Cleanthes mercedes a discipulis acceptavêrunt. Vixit parvo contentus. Pecuniæ, quæ nimis in hominum animis potest, minùs erat cupidus. Proculdubiò hic a divitiis possessus non est; sed possedit divitias. Sacris etiam per omnem vitam intentus, ut bonum ageret christianum, fatigabat Deum, festos dies religiosissimè celebrans.—De æternitate animorum sæpissimè disseruit: cujus hæc erat sententia: ANIMOS HOMINUM ESSE SEMPITERNOS; ET BONARUM RERUM SENSUM MANERE PERPETUÒ." *(P. Beroaldi vita per Barth. Blanchinum; Suetonii Editioni Lugdun.* 1548, *in fol. præfixa.)*

(*o*) To this nobleman Beroaldus addressed his edition of "Sextus Julius Frontinus De Re Militari," published *Bononiæ*, 1495. The epistle dedicatory is thus superscribed. "Ad Magnificum Senatorem Minum Roscium." "Hos" (says Beroaldus speaking of the authors "De Re Militari") "ego nuperrimè relegi emendavique, Mine mi, eruditorum nobilissime, in PONTICULANO TUO feriatus; quo saluberrimo secessu nihil amœnius, nihil magnificentius, nihil pulchrius novi. Adeo ut Laurentinum Plinianum, ut villæ Lucullianæ, ut prætoria omnia a luxuriosis ædificatoribus magnificenter extructa, cum Ponticulano Rosciorum comparari vix mereantur. Te beatum meritissimè nuncupant cui res adest et virtus." *(Vide Præfationes, &c. ante* 1500.)

of amiable and popular manners, and whose family was second only to that of the Bentivoglj in wealth and influence, Beroaldus also lived many years, upon terms of the most cordial and intimate friendship. As the professor was of a facetious turn, (*p*) and a lively and cheerful disposition, his society was much valued by his distinguished patrons; and their hospitable tables were very frequently enlivened by his wit, as well as instructed by his erudition. In his youth, Beroaldus, who was naturally of too convivial and gay a temper, contracted a passion for play, which involved him in great pecuniary difficulties. He was luxurious, dissipated, voluptuous; and frequently engaged in amours of the most scandalous nature. But from these juvenile follies, his marriage with an amiable woman, effectually reclaimed him; and he thenceforward became a man of regular manners. His biographers add, that he was polite, beneficent, free from envy, neither injuring, nor speaking ill of any, and ever willing to render the utmost justice to real merit: that he was unambitious

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Ludovicus Odaxius *(in Ep. Angelo Politiano, Lib.* iii. *ep.* 3.*)* terms him "Minus Bononiensis Sexdecim vir, homo meâ quidem opinione, plurimi faciendus; si nobilitatem, si divitias, si liberalitatem morum, si literaturam inspicias, &c." *(Vide Beroaldi de Morte ejus lamentationem inter Opuscula Beroaldi.)*

(*p*) "Erat naturâ lætus, sic ut vultum numquam mutaverit mœrore ullo. Super mensam semper comissimus, multa joco transigebat. Convivabatur assiduè, præsertimque cum Roscio suo, cujus mihi memoria sacrosancta est; ac Bentivolis; a quibus, quæcunque peteret, repulsam nunquam habuit." *(Vide Blanchinum; ut supra.)*

of honours, satisfied with modestly accepting those which were offered him; and that at the instance of his friends, he consented to undertake the office of secretary to the senate of Bologna; but as this happened towards the close of his life, he discharged the duties consequent thereupon, only for a very short period.

The university of Bologna was perhaps, scarcely ever in a more flourishing state, than during the interval when Beroaldus occupied the professor's chair. We have his own testimony that his auditory, at one time, consisted of six hundred students. Amongst the numerous foreigners who studied in this academy, were some of our own countrymen; (*q*) of one in particular, Beroaldus, on a certain occasion makes very honourable mention: and modern travellers inform us that the tombs(*r*) of several illustrious Englishmen are still to be seen in

See note (*m*) page 31 of the Memoirs of Politian.

(*q*) "Nuperrimè omnium suffragiis atque consensu, designatus fuit Rector utriusque scholastici conventus hujus, tam Italicorum quam provincialium, vir magnificus ac circumspectissimus, Thomas, Anglicus, vel ut latiùs loquar, Britannicus; qui et natalibus, et familiæ nobilitate, clarissimus est: idem, fortunæ bonis opulentus, animi dotibus excellens, cui genitale solum Anglia est, quam maximam illustrissimamque esse insularum, nullus ignorat, &c." *(Beroaldi Orat. ap. Rector. Scholast. Conventus.)*

(*r*) Upon one of these appears the following epitaph:

Hic situs in tumulo est Gulielmus, gloria gentis
Anglorum, quem mors traxit ad Elysios.
Nam modò festivos dum spectat ludere Bombos,
Bombardi fractus viribus occubuit.
Proh dolor! ergo homini quænam fiducia Marti,
Si jugulant etiam, quos putat esse jocos.

Thus given, though perhaps not correctly, by Guthrie, with

the Dominican convent at Bologna, who died whilst pursuing their studies in that city, in the reign of our Henry VII. That Picus was ever a regular attendant at the lectures of Beroaldus, does not appear. But as he was personally acquainted with the Bolognese professor, it is probable that he had occasionally the gratification of being an ear witness of his professional erudition. The biographer of Beroaldus enlarges, with much apparent interest, on the friendship that intervened betwixt him and Picus; adding, that the latter, being asked on a certain occasion by some of his friends, what he thought of Beroaldus; replied, "I consider him as a kind of living library."(*s*)

On quitting Florence, Picus seems to have formed a resolution of visiting and passing some time at Perugia, a city in the domains

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an additional prose inscription, shewing that the tomb was erected at the pious instance and charge of Robertus Fischer, November 4, A. D. 1503. *(Travels through Italy, &c. Vol.* ii. *p.* 186.*)*

(*s*) "Fuit etiam amicissimus Angelo Politiano, et Pico Mirandulæ, rari exempli viro, qui cum ab amicis rogaretur quidnam de Beroaldo sentiret; memorabilem illam, meritòque celebratam hominum memoriâ vocem, respondebat, Beroaldum sibi videri vivam quandam loquentem bibliothecam." *(Blanchini Vit. Beroaldi: ut supra.)*

That Beroaldus had accumulated a great fund of erudition, is evident from his works at present extant: amongst which his "Commentaria in Apuleium," and "in Suetonium," hold a conspicuous place. Pliny, Propertius, several of Cicero's works, and Columella, with other classic authors also experienced the benefit of his critical labours. The orator Codrus Urceus, his contemporary, entertained so great a reverence for Beroaldus, that he denominated him, by way of eminence, "The Commentator." "Codrus Urceus, orator, nostrâ homo memoriâ acri judicio, magnâ doctrinâ

of the church, situated at a middle distance between Rome and Florence, and also the seat of an ancient academy. His purpose therefore, indisputably was to increase his store

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beatissimâque rerum, verborumque copiâ præditus, per excellentiam quandam, Beroaldum Commentatorem Bononiensem appellare consuevit." *(Blanchinus; ut supra.")* His scholar and biographer, *Bianchini*, asserts, that he did not so much obey, as invent the *Legem Commentandi*. It must however be acknowledged, that the " portenta reconditorum verborum" too much deform the compositions of Beroaldus; and that both as a poet and a writer of prose, he is very inferiour to Politian.

Vossius says, Beroaldus was one of the greatest men of his age; a person of almost infinite reading; but sometimes deficient in judgment: (in quo subinde judicium desideres.) Though he died in the fifty-second year of his age, he survived most of his dearest friends, and most learned correspondents. He was interred at Bologna, where his epitaph is yet to be seen. *(Consule Vossium De Histor. Lat.)* The " Opuscula" of Beroaldus contain many characteristic singularities. His description of the " Pompa Nuptialis," on occasion of the marriage of his pupil, Annibale Bentivoglio, with the daughter of Ercole d' Este, Duke of Ferrara, is worthy to be classed with the " *Epistola erudita de Ferculis*" of Hermolaus Barbarus.

Philippus Beroaldus, the younger, so much commended as a poet, and who flourished in the court of Leo X. was not, as some have termed him, the son, but the nephew of the preceding. He was by no means, as Vossius expresses it, " tantus sectator reconditorum verborum" as his uncle: witness his own verses, said to be subjoined to the epistles of Pliny with the corrections and emendations of Beroaldus the elder.

Haut sequaris istos
Qui portenta vomunt reconditorum
Verborum; mage qui videntur esse
Docti inter sciolos; apud disertos
Nil insulsius est, ineptiusque.

(See a short life of the younger Beroaldus, by P. Valerianus. Jovium in Vit. Leon. &c. et Vossium, ut supra.)

of literary information, by means of such advantages as this seat of letters supplied. We can do little more however, than collect that the oriental languages and writers now began to engross the greatest share of his attention. Writing to Ficinus, at a juncture when he had been compelled to a temporary secession from Perugia, by a dread of the plague, he expresses the most sanguine expectation of being soon able to peruse the works of the impostor Mahomet, in the original. "Lately" says he, "I devoted a whole month of nightly as well as daily application to the Hebrew tongue. At present, I am wholly occupied by the Arabic and Chaldaic; and I do not despair of speedily making the same progress in them, I have made in the Hebrew: for in the last mentioned language I can already dictate a letter; though not with elegance, yet without grammatical inaccuracies. You see," he continues, "what ardency of desire, aided by labour and diligence, can effect, even where the capacity is none of the strongest." To these exertions, Picus declares he has been particularly stimulated, by the acquisition of certain oriental works, which he deems of inestimable value, and thrown in his way by the peculiar kindness of providence.

Pici oper. pag. 249.

Picus, now deeply engaged in a novel species of study, and that of a nature so recondite and abstruse, and so little familiar to the scholars of his age, whether buried in the sombre cells of a college in Perugia, or occasionally confined by circumstances to the solitude of his domestic library, becomes, for the space of a whole year, far less conspicuous

to public view, than heretofore; and seems, purposely as it were, to withdraw himself from the gaze of curiosity. A letter however, which in the month of October, 1486, he addressed to one of his friends, from the academic retreats of Perugia, may serve in a great measure to compensate for so long an interval of concealment; as it brings him forward in a novel and interesting light, and furnishes the reader with some new traits of his character, with the maxims by which he purposed to regulate his future conduct, and more especially with some obscure indications of a design, the subsequent prosecution of which was attended with important consequences.—The person to whom Picus addressed this letter, was Andreas Corneus of Urbino. After some introductory matter, "You exhort me," thus he proceeds, "to an active and public life; observing that so long a course of philosophical studies will be far from reflecting either glory or credit on your friend, if he does not at length consent to quit his seclusion, and act a conspicuous part on the busy theatre of the world. But in reality, my Andreas, I should then consider my vigils and labours thrown away, when disposed to agree in opinion with you on this point. I grant, a notion generally prevails, but it is an unnatural and fatal one, that persons of rank ought either entirely to neglect philosophical speculations, or at most, content themselves with such a superficial tincture as demands little effort, and serving only to heighten the false glitter of wit, confers no solid improvement on the mind. With them, the maxim of Neoptolemus has the force of a law, "aut nil

Pici oper. pag. 256.

philosophandum aut paucis." They regard as false and futile, the apothegms of the wise, which teach that solid and genuine felicity consists in the possessions of the mind; and that things extraneous and fortuitous, and which respect the body merely, are those with which we have, in reality, little or no concern.—You will say, I wish you so to embrace the province of Martha, as in the mean time, not to relinquish Mary's part. Thus far, I partly admit the fairness of your reasoning, and will not take upon me to criminate those who act accordingly. But although there may be no impropriety in passing from a contemplative to an active life, yet is it neither criminal nor blameable in any degree, to adhere to a life of contemplation. What! shall he be charged with misconduct, who, seeking virtue for her own sake, and seeking nothing extraneous to her, makes her the perpetual object of his desires and pursuits? Who joying in an abstraction from the world, which enables him to penetrate more deeply into the mysteries of God and of nature, can both neglect and contemn those goods which are deemed capable of filling the largest wishes of their votaries? Shall it be pronounced illiberal, and unbecoming a person of quality, to affect the study of wisdom unconnected with mercenary considerations? Who can patiently endure or listen to such assertions? How false is his philosophy, who has therefore philosophized, that he may or may not philosophize, at pleasure! His are the maxims of a tradesman, not of a philosopher.

You observe that it is high time I should pay my devoirs to one or other of the most

powerful Italian princes. You are not yet it seems, aware how proudly philosophers reason. Esteeming themselves, according to the Horatian phrase, "kings of kings," they cannot form their manners to cringing servility. Familiarized with solitude and self-converse, and satisfied with the tranquillity of their own minds, they find therein a present and never-failing resource; and therefore seek nothing extrinsic. What the vulgar deem honourable, they consider as disgraceful; and the things which human cupidity thirsts after, or to which ambition aspires, they neglect and despise. If these sentiments become every philosopher, they ought more especially to influence those, who favoured with the extraordinary gifts of fortune, possess the means of living not merely in ease and affluence, but in splendour. Honours and fortune doubtless raise their possessors to a height of conspicuous ostentation; but too often, like a mettlesome and restive charger, either shake the rider from his seat, or fret and gall, instead of carrying him at his ease. Grant me that happy mediocrity, which like a docile steed, bears a man more equably; and obedient to the rein, is governed rather than governs. True then to these sentiments, I prefer my solitude,—my studies,—the delights of reading,—the peace of my own mind, to the palaces of princes, the bustle of politics, and all the wiles and favours of a court. Nor do I desire, as the fruit of my literary leisure, to be whelmed and agitated in the tide and tumult of public scenes; but to bring at length, to the birth, the offspring which I have conceived; and to give in a propitious hour to public view, such

works as, however devoid of genius or learning, may attest at least the industry of their author. To convince you that the latter admits of no remission, I have by assiduous and intense application attained to the knowledge of the Hebrew and Chaldaic languages; and am at present struggling with the difficulties of the Arabic. Such are the achievements which I have ever thought, and still think worthy the ambition of a nobleman; though the expression may contain as much satire as truth. . . . . I purpose to set out forthwith to Rome; and to pass the winter there, if nothing unexpected intervenes to counteract my intentions, and direct my steps elsewhere. Thence, possibly you may hear what proficiency your friend Picus hath been able to make in his sequestered, monkish retirement; how far (if I may assume the tone of arrogance,) he will be found to stand in need of literary assistance from the assemblage of *literati*, which, you assure him he will not fail to meet with in that city. But, be he at Rome, or where else he may, the princes of Italy will not be destitute of sycophants, willing enough to bend to their caprice, and, as Plautus expresses it, "to be whirled about like a hand-mill at their pleasure."

"What you write on the subject of matrimony," continues Picus, "is not, I fancy, mere random matter; nor without its scope and aim: but I am Davus,—not Œdipus: Œdipus, at least, I chuse not to be on this occasion. Whatever be your meaning, deign to be more explicit; otherwise be Harpocrates. Let things turn as they may, I am prepared for the defensive. You need not be so pres-

sing for my Italian verses; to the composition of love sonnets, I have long since bid adieu; having other things in contemplation."

What immediately follows, relates to the misconduct of one of the domestics of Picus, who had repaid his indulgence with great ingratitude. But the conclusion of this epistle is too singular to be omitted. "In apologizing to our Floreanus for your friend's unfortunate amour, you have discharged a duty. He may indeed find both in the historians, in the poets, and even in philosophy itself, wherewithal to extenuate his fault He may shelter himself in the frailties of the greatest characters; even of David and of Solomon; not to mention Aristotle, who while he raved after women of loose character, so far forgot his own precepts on ethics, as to celebrate to the frail object of his passion, the same rites which were paid to Eleusinian Ceres. But this unfortunate person is so far from seizing and availing himself of these bulwarks, tending to ward off, or even to repel crimination, that he abhors, rejects and disclaims them. He publishes his crime, instead of deprecating animadversion. He mourns, but attempts not to palliate it. On this very account, I think, he has a juster claim on the forgiveness of the public, because he refuses to forgive himself. Nothing surely is more frail than man; nothing more potent than love. Even the unconquered, the unshaken mind of St. Jerome, in the midst of its absorption in celestial contemplations, could wander after the female, sportive dance. That temptation which could produce in the saint a momentary distraction,—what other would it not subdue?

If love could so far prevail in the desert,—on the flinty couch,—amidst severe fastings and macerations;—how should he not,—on a bed of down,—in shady bowers, and amidst an assemblage of delights? That man moreover, may justly complain of Neptune, who has only once suffered shipwreck. Should he strike again on the same rock, none will pity him, or stretch the assisting hand. We cannot but excuse him, whose repentance is so severe that he deems himself unworthy of either lenity or excuse. But of this perhaps, too much; since your friend, so far from wishing that the memory of the circumstance should be perpetuated by writing, is wholly intent on covering it by the purity of his future life, with entire oblivion. *Adieu.* Commend me in the warmest terms to your lord, and the whole family of Borromeo, for which I have always cherished, and still retain the sincerest affection. *From Perugia, October* 15, 1486."

The love of fame, and a too ardent thirst for praise, have perhaps, justly been imputed to Picus, as constituting his ruling passion, (notwithstanding the modesty and diffidence with which he frequently speaks of his own talents and productions,) especially if the charge be restricted to that period of his life, when maturer experience, and those religious impressions by which his latter years were more especially influenced, had not yet combined to rectify the errors of youth. We have, in part, seen the almost miraculous precocity of his attainments; which, as circumstances that have claimed, or will hereafter demand our notice, fully evince, were confined neither

to the varied erudition of Greece or Rome, nor to the mere fashionable and elegant accomplishments of the day. Caressed, flattered, courted, extolled as a prodigy of erudition, by the most distinguished scholars of his time, and not unconscious of his own qualifications and powers, we now behold him forming the bold design of exhibiting those qualifications and powers, in the most public manner, at Rome, on the most conspicuous theatre of the world. Of this project, it is not sufficient to say, that it subjected him to the certain charge of juvenile vanity and indiscretion; as it tended to expose him to the fiercest malignity of literary jealousy, and to all the fanatic rage of bigotted enthusiasm. The developement of this project however, constitutes the most prominent and conspicuous transaction of his whole life, and that by which he has chiefly been held up to the notice of succeeding ages.

Pici Epist. Thadeo Ugolino. Vide opera ejus; p. 248.

In a letter to another of his friends, Picus speaks more explicitly of his meditated expedition to Rome; and that, in terms which might almost lead us to suppose that he conceived himself prompted to it by motives of religion and duty. "You, my friend," says he, "kindly exhort me to remember the advantages which nature, or rather education and study have bestowed upon me, and to think of answering those high expectations which the world has already been induced to form from my reputation and character. Conscious of my own imbecillity, I pretend not to satisfy even the least sanguine of these expectations, by my own powers. The gracious and beneficent Father of lights, who has here-

tofore accorded me those endowments which have excited, in whatever degree, the hopes of my fellow-men, will, I trust, at some future time, enable me to realize them. I shall speedily set out for Rome in order to hazard an experiment of my proficiency, probably not without hazard. "Romam propero, ubi de nostris studiis periculum, vel cum periculo faciemus." If my undertaking prove in any measure successful, it is to be attributed to the blessing of God; his therefore be the praise: but if I fail, let it, as the natural consequence of my own weakness, be entirely attributed to myself."

Early therefore in the month of November, A. D. 1486, we discover our young literary adventurer apparently in high spirits, fully equipped for his journey to Rome; and about to quit his domestic retreat, in order to proceed upon this perilous enterprize. He defers his departure a few moments, merely to answer a letter addressed to him, probably from Florence, by an unknown correspondent, who had written to consult him respecting a passage of the Jewish historian Josephus; and to solicit some other literary favours. "Whosoever you are," says he, "I scruple not to call you my friend, since you stand so high in the esteem of Robertus Salviatus. If my books were at hand for consultation, I would answer your questions more at large; but they are gone before me to Rome, like so many precursors, to announce the coming of their master. I myself in my boots and travelling habiliments, ready to follow them, have hastily taken up my pen to address you in this style of jocularity and freedom." After reply-

Pici oper. p. 261.

Caligatus et petasatus.

ing to the queries of his correspondent respecting Josephus, he thus proceeds: "As to the Chaldaic alphabet, with which you request me to favour you, though fully disposed to oblige you in every thing that depends upon my own option, as you have not obtained the consent of Mithridates, I cannot gratify you in this instance, on account of my engagements with him. He peremptorily refused to teach me the Chaldaic language, until he had exacted a formal and solemn oath, that I should, on no account, communicate it to any person whomsoever. Of the truth of this, my friend Hieronymus Benivenius himself can certify you; who on a certain day being accidentally present whilst I was receiving a lesson, Mithridates, in a violent rage actually thrust him out of the room. But that your application may not prove entirely fruitless, I send you, as a substitute for the Chaldaic, the inclosed Arabic alphabet, which I have transcribed for your accommodation with my own hand." *Ex Frattâ. Nov.* 10, 1486.

De Mithridate, vide Colomesium in Italiâ Orientali; p. 16. Hamburg. 1730, in 4to.

Picus upon his arrival at Rome, published his "Conclusiones;" (*t*) consisting of nine hundred propositions, or subjects of discus-

(*t*) At the head of these "CONCLUSIONES," appears the following *programma*, or challenge.

JOANNES PICUS MIRANDULA LECTORI.

DE ADSCRIPTIS NUMERO NONINGENTIS DIALECTICIS, MORALIBUS, PHYSICIS, MATHEMATICIS, METAPHYSICIS, THEOLOGICIS, MAGICIS, CABALISTICIS, CUM SUIS TUM SAPIENTUM CHALDÆORUM, ARABUM, HEBRÆORUM, GRÆCORUM, ÆGYPTIORUM, LATINORUMQUE PLACITIS, DISPUTABIT PUBLICE JOANNES PICUS

sion, in almost every science, that could exercise the speculation or ingenuity of man; and which, extraordinary and superfluous as many of them appear to a reader of the present times, certainly furnish a more adequate idea of the boundless extent of his erudition and research, than any words can describe. These he promised publicly to maintain against all opponents whatsoever: and that time might be allowed for the circulation of his "Conclusiones," through the various universities of Italy, in all of which, he caused them to be published, (*v*) notice was given, that the

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MIRANDULANUS, CONCORDIÆ COMES: IN QUIBUS RECITANDIS NON ROMANÆ LINGUÆ NITOREM, SED CELEBRATISSIMORUM PARISIENSIUM DISPUTATORUM DICENDI GENUS EST IMITATUS, PROPTEREA QUOD EO NOSTRI TEMPORIS PHILOSOPHI PLERIQUE OMNES UTUNTUR, &c." *(Pici oper. p. 42.)*

"On the annexed nine hundred theses, relating to dialectics, ethics, physics, mathematics, metaphysics, theology, magic, and the cabala, partly his own, partly collected from the works of Chaldaic, Arabic, Hebrew, Grecian, Egyptian and Latin sages, Joannes Picus of Mirandula, Count of Concordia, will dispute publicly. In the detail of these theses, instead of adhering to the rules of classic elegance, he hath purposely adopted the manner and diction of the most celebrated Parisian disputants, the same being in most general use amongst the philosophers of our times."

Thus in one part of his "Apologia," he observes; "Mutanda loquendi ratio est mihi; enim cum barbaris sermo, et (ut lepidé est in proverbio) balbi non nisi balbos intelligunt." *(Apologia, pag. 83.)* And in another passage, speaking of what he had already written upon a certain subject in a more classical style, he says, "Sed illa fortè non magis ab istis magistris intelligentur, quam intelligentur barbara ab eruditis; quare et hìc aliquid secum hoc PARISIENSI STYLO dicemus, &c." *(Apolog. p. 116.)*

(*v*) The following additional words said to be subjoined

public discussion of them was not intended to take place, till after the feast of the Epiphany next ensuing. A further object of this delay was to afford to all scholars, even from the remotest of these seats of learning, who were desirous to be present and to assist at his disputations an opportunity of repairing to Rome, for such a purpose. So desirous was Picus of attracting thither, on this occasion, all the united wit, ingenuity and erudition that Italy could boast; that he engaged to defray, out of his own purse, the charges of all scholars from whatever part, who should undertake the journey to Rome for the purpose of disputing publicly with him on the subjects proposed.

This undertaking of Picus, however extraordinary it may at present appear, was in some measure sanctioned by the custom of his own age, in which public disputations were not unusual or unprecedented. He had fortified himself with the express permission of Innocent VIII. who at this time occupied the chair of St. Peter. He studiously and avowedly professed all possible deference to the authority of the church, solemnly engaging to support his theses, only "sub apostolicæ sedis correctione." Nay more, when in his list of "Conclusiones," after a great number

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to these "Conclusiones" in the earliest, have been omitted in the subsequent editions: "CONCLUSIONES NON DISPUTABUNTUR NISI POST EPIPHANIAM: INTERIM PUBLICABUNTUR IN OMNIBUS ITALIÆ GYMNASIIS: ET SI QUIS PHILOSOPHUS AUT THEOLOGUS AB EXTREMA ITALIA, ARGUENDI GRATIA, ROMAM VENIRE VOLUERIT, IPSE POLLICETUR DOMINUS DISPUTATURUS, SE VIATICI EXPENSAS ILLI SOLUTURUM DE SUO."

to be maintained, "secundum opinionem aliorum," he introduces no fewer than five hundred "secundum opinionem propriam," of these he says, "nihil assertivè, vel probabiliter pono, nisi quatenus id vel verum vel probabile judicat sacrosancta Romana ecclesia et caput ejus benè meritum, Pontifex Innocentius Octavus; cujus judicio qui mentis suæ judicium non summittit, mentem non habet." Vide "Conclusiones." operum, pag. 56.

The boldness of this challenge could not fail to astonish the learned in general: but astonishment soon gave place to envy; and the Roman scholars and divines in particular, whose credit was more immediately implicated, conscious perhaps, of their own inability to contend with this prodigy of erudition on equal terms, thought only of the means of precluding him from the opportunity of evincing his superiority in this popular and fashionable exercise. The lampoon and pasquinade, and such other literary weapons as timidity sheltered by secrecy could devise, were those to which they first had recourse. These being found insufficient to intimidate the youthful champion, a more effectual expedient was adopted. Of the theses thus published by Picus, thirteen were selected as containing matter of an heretical tendency. Though jealousy of those stupendous qualifications, which, combined with the advantages of illustrious birth, personal nobility, and great affluence, seemed to open to the person in whom they inhered a certain way to every honour and dignity that he could possibly desire, was, as before observed, the primary motive to this procedure; yet some well disposed though ignorant persons were not wanting to join in

the cry of heresy. They were persuaded that many of the theses of Picus must contain the germ of danger to the church, because they were expressed in terms to which their ears had been totally unaccustomed, or related to branches of science of which they had never heard so much as the names. It was of no avail, to urge that various doctors of the Romish church had, previously to their publication, perused the theses in question, and by subscribing them expressed their sanction of the whole. This, amongst others, the learned Buonfranscesco had done, who was bishop of Reggio, and at that juncture sustained the character of ambassador to the pope from the duke of Ferrara. Thus, though Picus continued at Rome a whole year, in expectation of reaping the harvest of praise which his juvenile vanity had led him to desire, he at last found himself not only debarred from all opportunity of signalizing himself publicly, as a disputant, but involved in a charge of heterodoxy: a charge, which of all others he had least expected to incur. (*w*)

Vita Joannis Pici, a Nepote ejus scripta.

(*w*) The formal discussion of the "Conclusiones" of Picus, certainly never took place. The following are the express words of Giovan-Francesco Pico: "Obtrectatorum simultate (quæ semper, velut ignis, alta petit) NUNQUAM EFFICERE POTUIT UT DIES ALTERCATIONIS PRÆSTITERETUR. Ob hanc causam, Romæ annum mansit; quo tempore vitiligatores illi, palàm eum et libero examine non audebant aggredi; sed strophis potius, et cuniculis sugillare, clancularíisque telis suffodere, pestiferâ corrupti invidiâ, (ita enim arbitrati sunt plurimi) conabantur." *(Vita Pici, Operibus præfixa.)* Yet Varillas, the most impudent of all falsifiers of historical truth, not only affirms that these disputations did take place, but enters minutely into the detail of this fictious debate. The theses, he says, were

Such is the account which his nephew and biographer has given of the more immediate consequences of this adventure. But let us hear Picus himself, who soon afterwards had occasion to advert to the same circumstances. "Having gone," says he, "to Rome, to pay the usual homage to the sovereign pontiff (pedes summi pontificis, Innocentii VIII. de more deosculaturus) at the same time, in conformity with my uniform habits and object,

Apologia, apud initium.

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maintained publicly; and before such a prodigious concourse of the learned, as was never assembled together on any other occasion. He particularly describes, not only the countenance and person, but also the manner, the elocution, the grace, the tones, the fire of the speaker. *(Anecdotes de Florence; p.* 196, 12mo. *A la Haye,* 1685.*)* This however, is only one out of numerous misrepresentations which deservedly degrade that author's work, from the rank of a history to that of a mere romance.

Janus Nicius Erythræus, *(in Pinacothecâ* iii. *p.* 178, *Lips.* 1692, 8vo.*)* instituting a kind of parallel between Picus and Alexander Cherubinus, a person remarkable for similar prodigious attainments and powers; relates a story to the following purport: When Picus had published at Rome those nine hundred subjects for disputation, found at the head of his works, which he proposed to maintain *ex suggesto*, against all opponents; Thomas de Vio, afterwards cardinal, placing himself upon the seat opposite the pulpit where Picus stood, enumerated one hundred arguments by which he intended to impugn and overturn so many of the positions of Picus. Picus beginning with the last of these arguments, recapitulated the whole so exactly, that Thomas, rushing from the seat which he occupied, exclaimed, "Tace, tace sis! jam tuâ istâ repetitione mihi factum est satis." Desist, desist, I entreat you; this repetition of yours has fully satisfied me. This relation is reconcileable with probability. Though the "Conclusiones" were never formally agitated, Picus, in the course of that year which he passed at Rome, frequently perhaps, indulged in what might be considered as *præludia*, or exercises preparatory to his great project; and occasionally gratified his friends with specimens of his talents and argumentative powers.

which prompt me continually to discuss or illustrate some literary subject, willing to perform something, as far as in me lay, compatible with the dignity of this great city, agreeable to the prince of the church, advantageous to myself and all who were studiously disposed, I drew up nine hundred questions on theological and natural subjects; concerning which I undertook to respond publicly in a general session of the learned. Scarcely had I attracted public notice, when a numerous and mixed croud of calumniators started up against me. Amongst various expressions of contempt, derision, obloquy and similar indications of displeasure, adopted by individuals according to the views and temper of each, five special charges, in particular, were alledged by the whispers of malevolence against me. One party, avowing their dislike of philosophy and learning in general, observed (in the true character of sciolists,) that as Adam was thrust out of Paradise, for affecting by the knowledge of good and evil to make himself like God, so those equally deserve to be exterminated from the church of Christ who seek to know more than they ought. Another excepted not so much against philosophy itself, as this particular mode of disputing and publicly cavilling on literary subjects, judging it rather calculated for parade and an ostentatious display of ingenuity, than the furtherance of real learning. A third party attributed to me no small share of confidence and temerity, for pretending at such an age, (not having then compleated my four and twentieth year,) to descant on the profoundest topics of philosophy, the most sublime myste-

ries of Christian theology, sciences the most abstruse and unheard of; and this, in the chief city of the world, before the most dignified assemblage of the learned. A fourth was less offended, that at Rome; that at so juvenile age; than that I pretended to discuss such a number of questions, that is to say, not fewer than nine hundred; censuring the undertaking as superfluous, pregnant with conceit, and beyond my powers. And lastly, those who as professors of theology had the greatest pretensions to wisdom, not satisfied with these lighter calumnies, pronounced me, not merely impudent, rash, arrogant; but a magician, an impious wretch, a new heresiarch in the church of Christ. (*x*)

(*x*) Among the obnoxious "Conclusiones" of Picus, there certainly are several which evince great boldness of speculation, and bring into question some of the leading doctrines of the Romish church. Such perhaps, is that "Nec crux Christi, nec ulla imago adoranda est adoratione latriæ." What shall we say of that position, that "sine conversione substantiæ panis in corpus Christi, vel paneitatis annihilatione, fieri potest, ut in altari sit corpus Christi secundum veritatem sacramenti." Notwithstanding the qualification which immediately follows, "quod sit dictum, loquendo de *possibili*, non de *sic esse*," to Picus might justly be applied that sentiment of the Apulian bard: *(Carm. Lib.* ii. *Ode* 1.)

> "Periculosæ plenum opus aleæ
> Tractas; et incedis per ignes
> Suppositos cineri doloso."

Does not the following moreover, which is one of the "Conclusiones" that was judged erroneous, "et hæresim sapiens," bespeak a candour and liberality, which was very foreign from the spirit of that communion of which he was a member? "Sicut nullus præcisè, sic opinatur, quia vult sic opinari, ita nullus credit sic esse verum præcisè, quia vult sic credere." From this conclusion, Picus himself *(in Apologiâ, p.*

Innocent VIII. though naturally of a mild and pacific temper, stunned with the clamorous representations of those who thought

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148,) deduces the following, by way of corollary. "Non est in liberâ potestate hominis credere articulum fidei esse verum, quando sibi placet, et credere eum non esse verum quando sibi placet." Is not this, in reality, one of the chief axioms upon which mutual toleration in religious opinions amongst protestants is founded? The good sense of Picus led him to suspect and discover many of those errors and impositions of the church of Rome, which were afterwards by Luther and others so boldly exposed. But perhaps, like Erasmus, he found himself not possessed of sufficient courage to become a martyr. In composing his "Apologia," all his skill and dexterity in argument were requisite to extricate him from the snare which his own ingenuousness had assisted to weave.

In the discussion of another of the "damnatæ Conclusiones," (*Apologia, p.* 116.) Picus relates an anecdote which would do honour to the pages of the "Epistolæ Obscurorum Virorum." When one of those divines, who were so clamorous in the cry of heresy against our youthful disputant, was asked what was the meaning of that word "Cabala," which so often occurred in the "Conclusiones" of Picus, he replied, that there was a certain very wicked and diabolical person, whose name was "Cabala," and that he had written largely against Jesus Christ; whence his followers had been denominated Cabalists. "Quinimò audi rem ridiculam. Cum semel quidam ex iis interrogaretur quid esset ista Cabala? Respondit ille, fuisse perfidum quendam hominem et diabolicum, qui dictus est CABALA: et hunc multa contra Christum scripsisse; inde sequaces ejus dictos CABALISTAS. Quis, quæso, risum teneat?" (*Picus in Apologiâ, p.* 116.) Picus devotes a long article in his "Apologia" to the elucidation of that thesis of his, "Rationabilius est credere Origenem esse salvum, quam credere ipsum esse damnatum." His discussion of this point is divided into seven heads; and in the seventh he proposes to inquire, on the supposition that Origen has been condemned by the church, "Quantum obliget in istâ materiâ credulitatem nostram determinatio Ecclesiæ?" "I demonstrate to you that Origen has erred; demonstrate to me that he ever repented," was the constant cry of these zealots. (Isti magistri nunquam clamare destiterunt, "Ostendo tibi Origenem

they had discovered amongst the "Conclusiones" of Picus so many of an injurious tendency, (fidei et religioni contrarias, scandalosas et malè sonantes, ac de non sanâ doctrinâ suspectas) and moreover, as our authority in-

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errâsse, ostendas tu mihi eum pœnituisse: numquam hoc ostendes, &c.") To vindicate Origen from this charge of pertinacity in his errors, and to undeceive one who insisted that the church had declared Origen to have perished in his perverseness,—Picus referred him to the testimony of a certain Greek author, and informed him where he might consult the work. "Why do you refer me to Greek books" (said the good father) "knowing me to be wholly ignorant of Greek? Let us appeal to the Latins. Have we not the "Fasciculus Temporum," which treats so eloquently of these matters?" "Produce then your Fasciculus," answered Picus; "Yet tell me, are you not contriving with this *Fasciculus* of yours to burn me as a heretic?—If so, away with you and your Fasciculus; the authority of which is good for nothing." The ecclesiastic in great wrath produced his Fasciculus, in which, subjoined to other matter concerning Origen, appeared this passage: "Grandis labyrinthus a diversis texitur, de Samsone, Salomone, Trajano, et isto Origene, an videlicet salvati sint an non? quæ quia sine periculo nesciuntur, nec etiam Ecclesia certificata est de his, Domino totaliter committenda sunt:" Some persons have been in great perplexity to determine whether Sampson, Solomon, Trajan, and this Origen were saved or not? But as these are matters of which we may remain ignorant without danger; and the church itself has obtained no certain information concerning them; they must be wholly left to the Lord. "Thus, the good Fasciculus:" adds Picus. "When the man heard that the church knew nòthing of the damnation of Origen, he turned pale; and while volumes of the most approved authorities could make no impression upon him, this Fasciculus had influence enough to induce him to change his opinion." *Vide Pici Apologiam, pag.* 142—3, where Picus relates another story of equally amusing import. These anecdotes serve at least to evince that Picus, during his residence at Rome, though he could not obtain a public discussion of his propositions, found sufficient exercise in private for his disputative talents. They also demonstrate that bigotry and ignorance are for the most part inseparable associates.

forms us, anxious to guard against schism, and to preserve untainted the minds of the faithful, and especially of the simple and unlearned, who were wont to flock to public disputations of this nature, (integritati fidei consulere volens, ne fidelium mentes, et præsertim simplicium, qui ad hujusmodi publicas disputationes confluere solent, corrumperentur,) was constrained to issue an apostolic brief or mandate, enjoining certain bishops, professors and others to examine the obnoxious "Conclusiones," and make their report of the real nature and tendency of them. Meanwhile, in these adverse circumstances, there is reason to suppose that Picus found it expedient to quit the city of Rome, and seek a temporary asylum at Florence, in the friendship of Lorenzo de' Medici. He immediately set about the composition of his "Apologia;" a work which not only served to refute the calumnies of his enemies, but convinced the world that his pretensions to very extraordinary powers were not spurious or empirical. The object of it was to shew, not merely that the obnoxious theses contained nothing inimical to the doctrines of the church; but that nothing less than the grossest ignorance, or the most malignant perversion, could have put upon them such a construction: and he concludes by dutifully submitting, not only the work in question, but all those which he might afterwards publish, to the censure and authority of the holy see.

This celebrated apology, notwithstanding the elaborate discussions which it involves, and the multifarious learning which it evinces, was completed in the short period of twenty

days, (*y*) and inscribed by Picus to Lorenzo, his friend and patron, in language as honourable to the grateful sensibilities of the one, as to the generosity and shining qualities of the other. "To you, Lorenzo, I have dedicated this apology; not, I can most seriously aver, because I deem it worthy of so great a personage, but because it is your most undoubted right: since to you I owe my all. Be assured that every thing I am, or may hereafter be, shall henceforward continue yours, with the same religious devotion. Words are too cold to express the ardency of my gratitude,—the love, fidelity, and respect, which your long tried kindnesses have excited in my breast."—After paying a further tribute to the distinguished virtues of Lorenzo, which he declares exceeded in brilliancy the singular magnificence of his fortunes, he intreats him to consider the respect which he is desirous of testifying on all occasions for his great character, as his sole motive for addressing to him the present work; utterly disclaiming all vainglorious intentions, all views of courting praise for a performance which he terms the reluctant fruit of his hasty vigils; extorted by necessity, and treating on subjects which he should otherwise have deemed foreign from his purpose. Pici oper. pag. 76. Ibid. pag. 76.

This apology, on its completion, Picus transmitted to the Roman pontiff. Innocent

(*y*) "Hæc ut nunc est, properante stylo mihi dictata sint, scripturo aliàs majore ocio et curâ; ut plura ita fortasse meliora. Hoc ipsum qualecunque est opus, VIGINTI EST NOCTIBUS elucubratum; quo edendo, celeritas mihi optanda magis fuit quam diligentia." (*Apolog. p.* 156.)

VIII. how much soever he might be satisfied with the arguments adduced by the author in his own vindication, was however informed by those to whom he had committed the cognisance of this affair, that a public agitation of some of these questions might possibly lead to a latitude of investigation dangerous to the faith. While therefore, he fully acquitted Picus of all pravity of intention, he thought proper to issue a mandate, that the little volume in which they were contained, should be suppressed, and the perusal of it no longer allowed. Reflection had so far altered the views of Picus himself on this head, that they coincided with those of the pope. He had spontaneously intreated his friends to content themselves with the perusal of his apology, leaving the questions at large undiscussed and unnoticed; adding, that though he had inserted none with any culpable intention; yet many of them, being suitable for academical exercises only, or for discussion in the social circles of the learned, were improper for the public ear; others of them could only be argued hypothetically, as a mere trial of skill; since they were connected with the erroneous systems of those philosophers, whose opinions he had ever condemned, as deviating as far from right reason, as they were hostile to the catholic faith. He concludes his apology with the following words: "Let then my enemies refrain from the perusal of these theses, because they are mine; my friends—because they may possibly deduce inferences from them, which are not mine."

Apologia, ap. finem.

Such was the issue of this project, suggested by youthful vanity and ambition; and

Picus afterwards acknowledged with thankfulness, that divine providence, which often educes good out of evil, had rendered the malevolence of his enemies a most salutary check to the career of vain-glory, in which he had been led so far astray.

"A sceptic of the last century (La Mothe de Vayer)" says M. Tenhove, "has spoken of Picus with contempt, because he affected to dispute "de omni scibili;" but does it follow, asks that author, from his being when a *child* ready to answer questions on any subject, that he afterwards wanted understanding?" Perhaps the sarcasm of De Vayer merits little notice. That Picus however, could not with propriety be termed a child, appears both from those notes of time indirectly furnished by his biographer, and his own express testimony. His nephew, moreover, speaking of that oration which he had composed, and intended to recite at Rome, if the projected disputations had taken place, and which is still extant, pronounces it a surprising proof of the genius and erudition of a person who was then only in his twenty-fourth year.

Sir R. Clayton's Memoirs of Tenhove. Vol. I. p. 329.

But Picus had not yet seen an end of all the disagreeable consequences of this affair. His enemies, frustrated in their primary aims, began to cavil against the "Apologia" itself. They affirmed, that by the very act of discussing the obnoxious questions, which he had undertaken to explain so conformably to the sense of the church, he had contravened the solemn engagement into which he had formerly entered, not to anticipate the decisions of the holy see.

He had now set out upon a tour into

France, as well with a view of gratifying his taste by visiting the different academies of that kingdom, as with the hope that during his absence, the storm which had been raised against him would be permitted to subside. So earnestly however, were these new representations pressed against him at the court of Rome, that Innocent was persuaded to issue a new mandate, citing him to appear in that city within a given time, to meet these new allegations. This mandate Picus received with implicit submission and obedience. Having, on his way to Rome, paid a visit to Florence, perhaps from a desire to confer with his friend Lorenzo de' Medici on the subject of his new difficulties, he appears to have received a new and most unequivocal proof of the affectionate regard of the latter. The sway which Lorenzo possessed at this juncture in the court of Rome, and the influence which he exercised over the mind of the supreme pontiff, are clear from the histories of these times. But whatever might be the occasion of so favourable a change in this affair of Picus, certain it is, that he received an express indulgence from Innocent, countermanding his journey to Rome, and permitting him to take up his residence in the vicinity of Florence. His final acquittal however, from this complicated charge of heresy and perjury, and from all the inquisitorial prosecutions, pains, and penalties annexed to these crimes, was reserved for a bull of Alexander VI. which bears date *die* 18. *Junii*: 1493. (z)

Pici Operib. præfix.

(z) ALEXANDER, servus servorum Dei, dilecto filio, nobili viro, JOANNI PICO, COMITI MIRANDULÆ. "Di-

The bold and public experiment which Picus had lately meditated, evidently pre-supposed an extraordinary degree of confidence

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LECTE fili, salutem et apostolicam benedictionem. Omnium catholicorum quieti et famæ, eorum præsertim quos generis nobilitas, literarum disciplina, vitæ fideique orthodoxæ integritas commendat, quantum cum Deo licet, consulimus. Dudum siquidem, cum primùm ad Innocentium Papam VIII. prædecessorem nostrum, et Romanam curiam te contulisses; et Noningentas in Theologiâ, et aliis facultatibus conclusiones, ex permissione præfati prædecessoris, publicè (ut moris est) disputandas affixisses, quas sub apostolicæ sedis correctione, te sustentare offerebas; et dictus prædecessor inter illas, aliquas fidei et religioni nostræ contrarias, erroneas, scandalosas, et malè sonantes, ac de non sanâ doctrinâ suspectas, ab aliquibus intellexisset; tunc integritati fidei consulere volens, ne fidelium mentes (et præsertim simplicium qui ad hujusmodi publicas disputationes confluere solent) corrumperentur; nonnullis venerabilibus fratribus, tunc suis, tunc nostris episcopis, et aliis sacræ theologiæ, ac utriusque juris professoribus per eum nominatis per literas suas, in formâ brevis, commisit, et mandavit, ut contenta in dictis conclusionibus examinarent, an aliquæ ex illis, ex vi verborum a fide catholicâ dissonarent, aut hæresim saperent: seu dubiæ et ancipites, ad erroneum sensum trahi possent: et ipsi prædecessori referrent, sicuti pleniùs in dicto brevi continetur; ut habitâ fideli relatione eorum, opportunè provideret. Qui quidem episcopi et professores, eidem prædecessori retulerunt, quasdam sibi videri conclusiones suspectas, et ut asserebant, hæresim sapientes; quas tamen conclusiones, gratiâ tantùm scholasticæ disputationis, ac sub apostolicæ sedis correctione disputandas publicaveras, et tales demum eas te habiturum professus es, quales per eundem prædecessorem nostrum judicarentur: jurejurando promittens, cuicunque declarationi, quam ipsum prædecessorum super hoc facere contingeret, assensurum. Deinde verò per dictum prædecessorem, accepto te quendam alium librum Apologeticum edidisse, in quo easdem conclusiones, in meliorem et catholicum sensum declarans, interpretabaris, et circa eas intellectum sinceræ fidei explicabas, idem prædecessor, ne præmissæ propositiones corda fidelium quoquomodo corrumperent, interdixit lectionem libelli

in his own natural and acquired resources. It was to commit his reputation, at once, to the

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prædictarum noningentarum conclusionum ; te tamen nulla ob præmissa incurrisse existimationis notam declaravit, ut in eisdem literis, quarum tenorem hìc pro expresso haberi volumus, latiùs continetur. Verùm, eidem prædecessori postea aliquibus suggerentibus, prætextu dicti Apologetici te præmisso juramento tuo contravenisse, te in Galliis agentem, ad curiam citari mandavit; cujus mandatis reverenter acceptis, ad Romanam curiam regressurus iter arripuisti: cumque in Italiam pervenisses, ex beneplacito ipsius prædecessoris in partibus Florentiæ substitisti. Interim verò præmissis ad nostram notitiam deductis, inquisitâque per nos totius negocii veritate, compertoque et præsertim referentibus venerabili fratre nostro Georgio episcopo Albanensi, et Ulixbonensi, ac dilectis filiis Joanne Baptista de Ursinis, Tituli Sanctorum Joannis et Pauli presbytero, et Francisco, Sancti Eustachii diacono, sanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ cardinalibus, quibus specialiter commiseramus, ut adhibito secum dilecto filio Paulo Genuensi, theologiæ ac ordinis sancti Dominici professore, et sacri palatii Apostolici magistro, se accuratè informarent, et nobis referrent, nihil aliud postea contra te actum, processum, seu attentatum fuisse; quodque in eodem Apologetico quod in orthodoxam fidem, a cujusvis suspicionis notâ, mentem tuam apud omnes revelandam scripseras, judicium et determinationem ipsius prædecessoris, ac sedis Apostolicæ, cui te humiliter submisisti, continuè expectare affirmabas, et in præmissâ promissione et juramento tuo perstiteris, prout etiam persistere intendis, et denuò etiam promittis. Ideo nos bonam et integram mentem et sinceritatem fidei, ac in nos et sedem Apostolicam devotionem et obedientiam tuam, paterno affectu complectentes; ac te quem etiam divina largitas variis virtutibus illustravit, pro potiori cautelâ tuâ, ab omni reatu perjurii, si quem etiam forsan indirectè, dicto juramento tuo, cujus formam hìc haberi volumus pro expresso, aliquo modo contraveniendo incurrisses, absolventes et absolutum fore censentes, causam commissionis hujusmodi adversùs te, et illius statum individualem pro expresso etiam habentes, et quantus pendeat coram quibuscunque judicibus, etiam sanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ cardinalibus, ad nos advocantes, motu proprio, et ex certâ scientiâ extinguimus: teque in eodem juramento tuo persistentem, juxta formam literarum ipsius prædecessoris, nullam omnino propter præmissa incurrisse exis-

most hazardous die. Yet, however extravagant his project; however it might partake of the spirit of literary chivalry; he was not on this occasion actuated by any sudden or capricious impulse. His plan was deliberately formed and matured; and he had called forth the extraordinary energies of his mind, to such preparatory exercises as were consistent with the magnitude and importance of the undertaking. Of this, a perusal of his nine hundred "Conclusiones" might suffice to convince the reader; but yet further testimony may be found in his oration "De Hominis Dignitate," composed in his previous retirement; and with which he designed to open the intended solemnity. It is drawn up in the form of an immediate address to the august and numerous assemblage of doctors and *literati* who were expected to witness, or bear a part in his disputations; and adorned with the diffuse graces

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timationis notam, et propter editionem declarationum et Apologetici, hujusmodi aut aliàs, nullam hæresis speciem, vel suspicionem, aut notam sinistram incurrisse, seu in crimen veri vel ficti relapsi incidisse, aut poenas vel censuras in jure vel alias, contra hæreticos vel de hæresi suspectos, contentas sive latas, quomodolibet incurrisse. Similibus motu et scientiâ, auctoritate præfatâ per præsentes decernimus et declaramus, inhibentes, districtiusque in vim sanctæ obedientiæ mandantes, ordinariis locorum et commissariis, ac officialibus quibuscunque, etiam hereticæ pravitatis inquisitoribus, ne te præmissorum occasione quomodolibet molestare, seu inquirere præsumant, decernentes irritum et inane, si secus, super his a quoquam, quavis autoritate, scienter vel ignoranter contigerit attentari, præmissis necnon constitutionibus et ordinationibus Apostolicis, cæterisque in contrarium facientibus, non obstantibus quibuscunque, de quibus etiam hìc expressè facienda esset mentio specialis. Datum Romæ, apud sanctum Petrum sub annulo Piscatoris, die xviij Junii. M.CCCC.XCIII. Pontificatûs anno primo."

of studied eloquence. But like a second Origen, who may, not inaptly be considered, as in many respects his prototype, and with whose writings he was deeply conversant; Picus, on this occasion, intermingles with the evidences of strong and vigorous powers of intellect, the reveries of a luxuriant and enthusiastic imagination. What Dr. Jortin emphatically terms the "furor allegoricus," peculiarly characterises this oration. Sentiments of the most dignified kind are here debased, by an admixture of such as are derived from the illusions of platonism, and even from sources still more visionary and remote. The rites of heathen worship, the mythology and mysteries of Egypt and of Greece, the dreams of Mahometism, and the poetical rhapsodies of remotest times, are herein represented as concurring with revelation, in adumbrating the same truths, and inculcating the same precepts. Such were the corruptions of christianity, and such the enthusiasm of some of the most virtuous characters at this period. The admirers of what may be termed the profane erudition of classic times, were so extravagant as to adapt the phrase and character of the Augustan age to the habits and usages of their own social intercourse. The theologian, by an attachment equally overweening, was induced to invest the plain and simple truths of revelation with the incongruous garb of human philosophy. By those "βεβηλοι κενοφωνιαι, και ανθιθεσεις της ψευδωνυμου γνωσεως," those profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called," against which St. Paul warns his beloved disciple, the youthful fancy of Picus was doubtless led astray.

Remarks on Ecclesiastical History. Vol. ii. pag. 237. Lond. 1752, in 8vo.

1 Tim. vi. 20.

In the proem to this oration, composed by Giovan-Francesco, his nephew, we are informed that it was made public after the decease of the author, in compliance with the urgent and repeated instances of the learned: and that Picus himself, had he been living, would probably have refused his consent to such a measure. A small portion indeed of the concluding materials of which it is composed, may be found interwoven in the former part of his "Apologia," the rest he kept studiously concealed, and communicated only to his most confidential friends.

"I have read," (thus he commences his address,) "honourable and reverend auditors, in the remains of Arabic literature, that Abdallah the Saracen, being asked what object, on this great theatre of the universe, he deemed most worthy of admiration, answered, MAN. Trismegistus, with no unlike sentiment, exclaims, "Magnum, ô Asclepi, miraculum est homo." Considering the reason of these assertions, I found myself unsatisfied with the arguments generally alledged in favour of the dignity of human nature; such as that man is the interlocutor between the deity and his creation; holds intercourse with superiour intelligences; is enabled by the sagacity of his perceptions, the light of intellect, and the researches of reason, to subject inferiour creatures to his dominion. That he is the priest of nature; the link of that chain, which connects the shadows of time with the realities of eternity; termed by Persian sages, the more than hymeneal *copula* of the universe; and by David, said to be little lower than the angels. Great and distinguishing as these characteris-

tics are, he appears to me to possess one privilege yet more admirable."

After an exordium thus calculated, by its novelty and importance, to command attention, he proceeds to observe, that the wise and beneficent architect of the universe, having completed this stupendous fabrick, which teems in all its parts with varied being, one creature alone was wanting, capable of estimating the wisdom of its contrivance, admiring its magnitude, and delighting in its beauty. But therein, no solitary chasm remained to be filled. Man, unlike other orders of being, was to be circumscribed to no definite destination. Placed in the midst of an immense scene, every where full and perfect in its distribution, his creator bade him look around, amidst the various orders of existences, chuse his own model, and assume that rank which pleased him. The brute, (says Picus,) receives, on its entrance into being, those capacities and propensities which it cannot alter or exceed. The superiour intelligences were from the beginning, or soon afterwards became, what they must be to all eternity. To man, on his production, the Almighty Father gave the germ and seeds of multifarious existence. Which of these he shall culture, is left to his own choice. He may vegetate with the plant;—he may sensualize himself into a brute;—he may reason himself into a celestial being;—he may refine and spiritualize his nature into pure intellect, till he reach, or even surpass, the high destination of angelic essences, and each created being. This then, he argues, is the most valuable and admirable privilege of our nature: "UT SIMUS QUOD ESSE VOLUMUS."

After an exhortation to make the most of our high capabilities, to aim at the utmost height of intellectual improvement within our reach, in order that at length, transcending all middle flights, we may enter the immediate presence-chamber of divinity itself, and vie with Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones for precedency of perfection; he proceeds to point out that progressive course of discipline through which the mind must necessarily pass, for the attainment of so sublime an end. By the aid of ethics, or moral philosophy, the headstrong and vicious affections of our nature are to be reduced to due subordination. By dialectics, or the laws of ratiocination, the mind is to be purged from ignorance and false prejudice, and the reasoning powers invigorated and improved. Thus prepared, the candidate is to be introduced into all those various departments of science which have respect to the philosophy of nature, in its largest acceptation. The last and highest gradation, and to which the others are subservient and introductory, he defines to be, theology, or the study and contemplation of the deity, in his own abstract and exalted nature. Such, in its minuter divisions, Picus asserts to be that scale of intellectual communication betwixt earth and heaven, of which the ladder in the patriarch's vision was a symbol; and upon which, as it were step by step, man is permitted with the angels to ascend and descend, till the mind finds blissful and complete repose in the bosom of divinity. This is the superlatively happy and tranquil state, which is to constitute the soul's grand object and aim, throughout her whole career of knowledge. To this, ethics

shall concur, by harmonizing the passions; dialectics—by controuling the jarring verbosity of disputation; experimental philosophy—by correcting the errors of opinion and hypothesis; till at length, nature, who according to Heraclitus, is the offspring of war, (ex bello genita) and hence by Homer, termed contention, and is therefore unable to put us in possession of solid peace,—conduct us to her divine mistress, theology; who shall bestow that beatific tranquillity, which the world taketh not away; and unite the disputants of every sect and school, in that celestial bond of amity, which shall lead them to acquiesce together in the contemplation, love, and imitation of the great First Cause.

This, in the view of Picus, is the sublime course of progressive discipline, shadowed or inculcated in the institutions of Moses; from those who, as yet polluted, were compelled to abide without, to those, who by a gradual purification, and a successive participation in the rites of the sanctuary, were at length prepared to enter into the holy of holies. This was the scope of the ancient Grecian mysteries, in their various progress of initiation: this the hidden meaning couched in the three celebrated Delphic sentences: this, the course of instruction veiled in the enigmatical precepts of Pythagoras, the parables of Zoroaster and the Chaldees, and the mysterious *dogmata* of Moorish and Cabalistic philosophers: to demonstrate which, Picus having descanted at some length on their respective rites and doctrines, and the interpretation of them, proceeds to that which may be considered as the most interesting part of his oration, in the following terms.

Μηδεν αγαν.
Γνωθι σεαυτον.
Ει.

"Such, learned and reverend fathers, are the reasons, that have not merely animated, but impelled me to the study of philosophy: which I am led to say in answer to those who condemn such studies, especially in persons of rank or fortune;—studies they are, I grant, unhappily for our age, held rather in contempt, than honour: so deeply are the minds of men, in general, possessed with the unnatural and fatal maxim, "Aut nihil, aut paucis philosophandum:" as though to investigate, to familiarize ourselves with the causes of things, the operations of nature, the mechanism of the universe, the counsels of the Supreme Being, the mysteries of heaven and earth, were an attainment of no value, except so far as it were conducive to honours or emolument. The many, I say it with indignation, hold it no part of wisdom to cultivate the study of wisdom free from mercenary views: so that we now see chaste Minerva, sent by the peculiar favour of heaven to sojourn amongst men, every where exploded, ridiculed, rejected; without an advocate or friend, unless she consent, as it were to prostitute herself, in order to bring home the base reward of corruption, to fill the coffers of her admirers. And (what still more excites my regret and indignation) it is now become the open and avowed language, not of men of rank alone, but of philosophers themselves, that such studies are not worth following, because there are no stated rewards, no settled stipends for their encouragement: they forget that the complaint itself proves how little title they have to the name which they bear. Men like these, whose whole lives are

devoted to ambition or lucre, can feel little attachment to truth for her own sake. As to myself, I can avow without a blush, that I have cultivated philosophy for herself alone ; and never, in my studies or lucubrations, sought or desired any other reward than the improvement of my own mind, and, what has been my supreme object, the discovery of truth. To truth indeed, so strong and ardent has been my attachment, that I have voluntarily relinquished all care of my own affairs, public and private, to give myself wholly to a life of contemplation : a resolution, from which neither the calumnies of envy, nor the obloquy of wisdom's avowed foes, ever could, or shall hereafter, deter me. I have been instructed by philosophy herself, to comply rather with the dictates of my own conscience, than the opinions of others ; and to be solicitous, not so much to escape ill language, as myself to avoid the commission of evil, both in word and action.

I could not however, venerable fathers, but be sensible, that my proposed disputation would prove as acceptable and agreeable to you all, who favour useful knowledge, and have honoured me with your august presence, as it is offensive to others. For it does not escape me, that many have already condemned, and still continue to blame my undertaking, on several accounts. They who strenuously and religiously persevere in a virtuous project commonly have not fewer, but more calumniators, than they who are perverse in evil. There are, who condemn this mode of public disputation, and discussion of literary topics, as rather calculated for the ostentation

of learning and ingenuity, than for real improvement in useful knowledge. There are, who though they object not to the mode of exercise, yet cannot approve that a person of my age, not yet having compleated his twenty-fourth year, should have the confidence to propose a disputation on the sublime mysteries of christianity,—the profoundest points of philosophy, — the most abstruse sciences; and that too, in this very populous city, and before the most august assemblage of the learned. Allow him to dispute, say others, but surely this pretence of discussing nine hundred questions, is an undertaking as vain and superfluous, as it is beyond the reach of his ability. To these objections I should long since have yielded, had the philosophy which I profess, instructed me so to do. The same would teach me to decline any reply to them, if I conceived that such reply must necessarily lead me to recrimination. But disavowing all intention to irritate and provoke; and, malevolence equally apart from our minds as Plato affirms it to be from the celestial choirs; —let us discuss with candour, the reasonableness both of my undertaking, and of the number of questions on which I propose to dispute.

And first, to those who entirely arraign this public mode of disputation, my reply shall be short: since the impropriety, if such it must be deemed, is common to me, not only with you all, most worthy auditors, who have frequently discharged this function with great honour and credit to yourselves; but with Plato, Aristotle, and the most approved philosophers of every age, who were ever actu-

ated by the conviction that no practice conduces more to the discovery of that truth which was the object of their researches. As, by gymnastic exercises men's corporeal powers are invigorated, — so doubtless, by frequent exercises in this literary *palæstra*, their mental powers are rendered more vigorous and acute: and I am persuaded that the poets of antiquity by that armour of Pallas, so much celebrated in their songs,—the Hebrews, in affirming that iron is the symbol of the wise, meant to convey no other allusion than to these laudable contests, so highly favourable to the acquisition of wisdom. Hence too, probably, the Chaldeans, in that man's horoscope who should prove a philosopher, always held it indispensible "ut Mars Mercurium triquetro aspectu conspiciat;" as though, without these oppositions, these contests, all philosophy must become supine, and void of animation.

But with those who deem me unequal to my undertaking, my method of defence is not so easy. If I assert my own sufficiency, I shall probably incur the imputation of vanity and self-complacency:—if the contrary, I shall be pronouced rash and inconsiderate. Observe the difficulty in which I am involved; — in what an arduous situation I stand; being unable, without the risk of incurring censure, to promise that of myself, which I cannot without censure, hereafter, fail to perform. I might say with Job, "there is a spirit in man;" or with St. Paul to Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth:" self-conviction however, constrains me rather to confess, that from me nothing great or singular is to be expected. A student, an ardent admirer of

useful science, I willingly avow myself: but any pretension to superiour learning or wisdom, I do not arrogate. Let not then the voluntary assumption of so great a burthen upon my own shoulders, argue a want of consciousness of my own infirmity, but only a conviction that (what is peculiar to literary contests) in these trials of intellectual strength, there is an advantage even in being overcome. Hence then, the most feeble disputant acts both allowably and commendably, not only when he does not decline, but even when he invites the contest; since the vanquished derives not injury, but benefit from the victor; departing from the field, by his means more experienced, and returning to any future combat better prepared. Animated with this hope, I, a feeble combatant, stand forward, not afraid to engage with the most redoubted and strenuous of you all. Whether in so doing I act inconsiderately or otherwise, the spectator will better judge from the event of the contest, than from my years.

It remains, thirdly, that I reply to those who take umbrage at the number of questions which I have proposed to discuss: as if the responsibility reclined upon their own shoulders, and did not, however great it be, rest wholly on myself. What a morose and unreasonable conduct is that, which seeks to prescribe bounds to the labours of another;—and insists on mediocrity in an undertaking, which may be pronounced, in the language of Cicero, "eo melior quo major!" In an attempt of such magnitude, I have no alternative but either to succeed or fail. If I fail, my enemies will doubtless condemn me: my friends

will find grounds of excuse in this consideration, that for so young a man, of talents so moderate, of so little erudition, in an affair of this arduous nature to fail, were more justly a subject of pardon than of accusation. Besides, in the opinion of the poet,

> — Si deficiunt vires, audacia certè
> Laus erit: in magnis et voluisse sat est.

But, if in our own age, many, after the example of Gorgias the Leontine, have been wont, not without credit to themselves, to propose disputations, — not merely on nine hundred topics, but on every question—in all sciences, — why may I not without censure, be permitted to dispute on points of science, numerous I grant, but all determined and ascertained?

"But this, at least," say they, "seems ambitious and superfluous." I contend that it is not superfluous, but necessary: and this, if the objectors will consider the method and nature of my studies, they will be constrained to acknowledge. Those who have confined themselves to any particular class of philosophers, who have attached themselves to Aquinas, for instance, or Scotus, whose works are now in many hands, might be allowed to make trial of their talents in the discussion of a few points. But I have so conducted my inquiries, as that, "Nullius in verba juratus," I have ranged at large amongst all the schools, turned over works of every description, and formed an acquaintance with all sects. I was therefore bound to make my disputations general, lest I should seem to stand forward,

merely as the advocate of some particular *dogma*;—as a person addicted to one school, and holding the rest in contempt. If moreover, a few of my theses might have relation to individual schools, it must happen that many more would have a general reference to all. I shall not be apprehensive of being condemned, because,

"Quò me cunque ferat tempestas, deferor hospes:" Hor.

Since it was a rule sanctioned by the ancients themselves, to examine works of all kinds, and to leave no treatise unperused. Such was the practice of Aristotle in particular, who was thence denominated by Plato "ἀναγνωςης," or, the reader. For a student to confine himself to the porch or the academy alone, were an argument of a contracted mind: nor can we pretend to select from each, that which best commends itself to us, without making ourselves acquainted with the works of all: not to say that every author has some distinguishing peculiarity, which we should look for in vain in the writings of another."

Picus, having next descanted on the distinctive and characteristic peculiarities of Scotus, Aquinas, and others of the principal scholastic writers; of Averroes, and other Arabian philosophers, and of those among the Greeks who rank as the leading followers of the Aristotelic and Platonic schools,—proceeds to observe,—that if there be any sect inimical to established truths, who have employed their ingenuity in scoffing at the cause of piety, those truths are rather confirmed than enfeebled by such attacks; as flame burns more strongly and brightly, by being disturbed.

Moved by this consideration, he promises to bring into discussion the leading doctrines of every sect; that from the comparison and collision of opinion, truth may be rendered more conspicuous.

"But after all," he adds, "how little should I have performed, if adducing merely the opinions of others, how various soever; if approaching this *symposium* of the wise without my own symbol, I should contribute no fruit of my own ingenuity to add to the feast. To be wise merely with the learning of other men; and as if the discoveries of former times had precluded our own exertions; as if the vigour of nature in ourselves were exhausted; to be able to strike out no thought which may either demonstrate or furnish some distant clue to truth, is, as Seneca remarks, unworthy a liberal mind. If the agriculturist deprecates barrenness in his field, the husband in his wife; certainly that divine *afflatus* associated with the human soul, must mark its unfruitfulness with a disapprobation still stronger, in proportion to the greater dignity of the offspring which were justly expected. Hence, in addition to branches of science generally known, not satisfied with propounding many particulars from the remote theology of Mercurius Trismegistus,—many from the Pythagoric and Chaldæan systems,—many from the more secret mysteries of the Hebrews,—I have prepared for examination a great variety of theses, the result of my own meditations and discoveries; and which have relation to subjects both human and divine."(*a*)

(*a*) In the first place, Picus declares his intention to

We have thus attempted to give, as far as our authorities would permit, a circumstan-

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propose a method of reconciling Plato and Aristotle : an attempt not unthought of in former times. Boethius, amongst the Latins, Simplicius amongst the Greeks, had promised such an undertaking ; but the latter had not, and it is doubtful whether the former ever actually executed it. Various scholars however, ancient and modern, had given testimony to its practicability. He avows a similar intention with regard to a variety of seemingly discordant passages in the works of Aquinas and Scotus,—Averroes and Avicenna.

II. He promises to lay down seventy-two new physical and metaphysical principles of his own discovery, by which he flatters himself, that all questions relating to natural and theological science may be discussed and determined, in a method hitherto untaught in the schools, and unpractised by any of the doctors of the age.

III. To propose a new method of reasoning by numbers; known indeed to Pythagoras, Plato, and some of their followers amongst the ancients, but so entirely lost, he asserts, to modern times, that scarce a vestige of it remained: and by this method he promises to answer seventy-four of the principal questions in physics and metaphysics.

IV. Picus intended to introduce what he calls certain "Magica Theoremata;" but is careful to distinguish between that species of magic supposed to depend on the agency of evil spirits, which he pronounces impious and execrable, and that which in fact, forms the most recondite part of the philosophy of nature, and constitutes the species in question. For amongst the ancients, he observes, the term *Magus*, was not a name of reproach, but of honour; and used to denote a person of consummate wisdom. The magic here alluded to, was in fact, nothing but an investigation of the most secret and admirable mysteries of nature. It was that species of knowledge, for the acquisition of which Empedocles, Democritus, and Plato, travelled into distant countries; which was eagerly studied by so many other sages of antiquity; and in latter times had occupied the attention of various of the moderns, and that in particular, of our own learned countryman Roger Bacon. This study therefore, far from being of an irreligious nature, has, he observes, a more powerful tendency than any other, to impress the mind with religious sentiments, and to lead it to ascribe glory and praise to the great Creator.

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tial detail of those events which characterized the remarkable enterprize of Picus at Rome, as

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V. From the most ancient Hebrew writings he undertakes to illustrate and confirm the principal truths of the catholic faith and doctrine. It was, he observes, an assertion of Origen and some others, in conjunction with the Hebrew doctors, that Moses, when he received the written law on the mount from God, was also favoured, from the same divine source, with its most secret and mysterious interpretation. The former he was to publish to all the people: the latter he was forbidden to commit to writing, or reveal to any but Joshua his successor; who should in like manner communicate it to the chiefs of the sacerdotal order only. Thus then, it continued to be handed down by oral tradition; until at length, after the Babylonish captivity, and the restoration of the temple, when on account of the frequent calamities and revolutions incident to the Jewish polity, it seemed incapable of being longer transmitted in its ancient purity by this mode, Esdras having assembled the Jewish wise men, committed it to writing from their mouths. These traditions therefore, consisting of seventy books, constitute the Jewish Cabala. Sixtus IV. the predecessor of Innocent VIII. apprized of their tendency to strengthen the christian cause, had ordered them to be translated into the Latin language, but only three of the books were published before his decease. Picus however, having obtained a copy of the originals, at a great expense, and perused this voluminous collection, with immense labour, was so sanguine as to persuade himself that he discovered in them a strong confirmation of the chief mysteries of christianity.

Lastly, he promised to state his own interpretation of the dark and mysterious poems of Orpheus and Zoroaster; the former of whom is preserved by the Greeks almost intire; the latter, mutilated amongst them, is found more compleat in the Chaldaic; and both are esteemed the fathers and sources of ancient wisdom. On the model of the Orphic theology, as Jamblicus believes, Pythagoras founded his; and thence the secret doctrine of numbers, and every sublimer part of the Grecian philosophy flowed. But so deeply are his doctrines enveloped in poetical fiction, that they are not to be disentangled from their enigmatical concealment without the greatest labour. "Let me not," says Picus, towards the close of his oration, "be considered as actuated by vanity, which is far from my disposition, but as compelled

well as the consequent difficulties in which it involved him. He is henceforward, to be contemplated chiefly in a state of seclusion, averse from public scenes, limited in his intercourse to the society and correspondence of a few chosen friends, and devoted more closely, if possible, than ever, to his studies. Even the remembrance of his late adventure seems to have been consigned to a kind of studied oblivion; nor does the least mention of it occur in any of his own letters, or of those of his correspondents, of a date subsequent to the time in which it happened. It is a circumstance no less true than singular, that throughout the whole correspondence of Politian and the learned men of his age, as transmitted to our times, not the slightest allusion to this interesting transaction is to be found. A silence so mysterious, and with respect to a subject so calculated to excite curiosity and discussion, must doubtless have proceeded from reasons well understood, and of acknowledged weight and cogency.

That the commencement of the year 1488 found Picus in the possession of his happy and peaceful asylum at Florence, may be presumed

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by the obloquy of those who would decry me and my performances, when I avow that my purpose in this public disputation is not so much to evince that I know much, as that I know what many are ignorant of." "Quod" (he proceeds) "ut vobis re ipsâ, Patres colendissimi, jam palam fiat, ut desiderium vestrum, Doctores excellentissimi, quos paratos, accinctosque expectare pugnam, non sine magnâ voluptate conspicio, mea longiùs oratio non remoretur; quod felix faustumque sit, quasi citante classico jam conseramus manus."

from a letter (*b*) addressed to him by Hermolaus Barbarus from Milan, where he at this juncture resided in character of ambassador of the Venetian republic. After some introductory matter, Hermolaus contrives to intermingle with the usual praises of his young friend such salutary admonitions as he thought more especially seasonable at that time. "It were superfluous" (thus he addresses Picus) "to exhort you to persevere in your love of letters, in which you are so accomplished; to bid you cultivate ethics and the moral virtues, for in these such is your proficiency as to leave it dubious whether you have made greater progress in their theory or practice. Great confessedly, beyond all that can be conceived,

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(*b*) This letter which occurs among the letters of Politian; (*Lib.* xii. *ep.* 37.) and is also subjoined to the letters of Picus (*in Edit. Henricpetrianâ, Basileæ*, 1601) is dated *Mediolani Cal. Jan.* 1487. But the Venetians, Florentines, and Pisans begin the year at the vernal equinox. (See "*Encyclopædia Britannica*," *last edition, article Chronology.*) To this practice, scholars who made the Latin language the vehicle of their epistolary correspondence, adhered; whilst in the divisions of the month they made use of the terms of the Julian kalendar. Hence, according to our mode of reckoning, the above date corresponds with January 1, 1488. On some occasions we find these scholars, too indolent to consult the Julian kalendar, in noting the day of the month content themselves with the common mode. Thus a letter of Marsilius Ficinus, to Germano de Ganai, (*Oper. Pici, p.* 274—5.) in which he gives an account of the decease of Politian and Picus, is dated *die* 23 *Martii* 1494. The decease of Politian, as already mentioned, took place September 24, 1494. Ficinus wrote this letter, according to our reckoning, March 23, 1495, but complying with the Florentine usage abovementioned, he would not write 1495 till the twenty-fifth of the same month. This observation is important, as enabling the attentive inquirer to verify dates which might otherwise perplex and lead him astray.

are those endowments for which you are indebted to the felicity of your own genius, or rather to the Creator. Hence your attainments at this early period of life are of a kind to which old age itself could not without presumption aspire. But remember Picus, these accomplishments are not self-derived ; they are the gifts of nature,—I should rather say, of God : though you might indeed, with more semblance of reason, ascribe to yourself the merit of them, than of some others of your advantages. For confessedly, you owe still less to yourself, nobility, fortune, health, symmetry, qualities, in which you vie with every other, no less than in those, in which your personal exertions have more concern. Consider, I entreat you, and never lose the recollection, how infinitely you stand obliged to that Being who hath thus enriched you ; that your debt of gratitude can never be expunged or discharged. Think what his power is, who hath bestowed such powers on you ; what his goodness, who amongst so many thousands, hath chosen to distinguish you by marks of his special favour ; who gave you in childhood to eclipse the wisdom of age, and before the years of manhood to be admired by the circles of the learned, as a prodigy of erudition. If you were insensible of, or indifferent to these reflections, I must affirm with freedom, that you could not be so eminent as you are." He thus concludes a letter, pregnant with these and similar friendly admonitions ; " Remember me to Marsilius, and your own affectionate Salviatus ; I scarcely need to add the name of Politian, since he, as I am given to understand, will shortly be with me at Milan : than

which meeting I shall deem no event more fortunate, that can occur during the whole period of my embassy. Nothing can exceed the pleasure I derive, from being informed that your library continues to receive daily accessions to its literary ornaments. To the citizens of Florence, how greatly is learning indebted; amongst those citizens, how peculiarly to the Medici; amongst the Medici, how peculiarly to LORENZO! who cherishes this highly ornamental propensity of his illustrious house, with no less ardour than the welfare of the republic, of which he is invested with the administration and charge.

The retreat assigned to Picus by his generous friend Lorenzo, was at Fiesole, in the vicinity of Florence, (*c*) celebrated for its commanding heights, which overlook the city, its pleasing diversity of wood-crowned hills, and well watered, luxuriant and sheltered vallies, which constitute the most captivating features of rural scenery. Here Lorenzo himself had a delightful villa, where he and Poli-

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(*c*) "Cum superioribus diebus, ego et Picus noster Mirandulanus, Fæsulanos imò subfæsulanos colles peragraremus, prospiciebamus obiter subjectum oculis totum Florentiæ urbis agrum, &c. (*Ficini Epistolar: Lib.* ix. *ep.* 1.) This peculiarity in the situation of Fiesole did not escape our own immortal Milton, who was personally acquainted with the vicinity of Florence:

"His ponderous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Hung on his shoulders, like the moon, whose orb
Through optic-glass, the Tuscan artist views
At evening, from the top of FESOLE;
Or in VALDARNO; to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains in her spotty globe."
(*Paradise Lost, book* 1, *line* 286, *&c.*)

tian spent many of their hours of literary leisure. Not far from hence was the rich abbey or monastery (*d*) founded by the elder Cosmo, for a society of regular Benedictines, at an expense (including its valuable library) of 84000 gold crowns. Matteo Bosso (*e*) was now the superiour of this religious establish-

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(*d*) The abbey of Fiesole is about two miles from the city of Florence. "Trajecto pedibus siccis Mugnione, poetis decantato, occurrit in declivi montis Abbatia Fesulana, &c." *(Mabillon Museum Italicum.)*

(*e*) It appears from the account of Scipione Maffei, *(degli Scrittori Veronesi Libro terzo)* that Matteo Bosso was a native of Verona. That writer also observes, that he was the intimate friend of Ermolao Barbaro, as well as of Pico. That the latter was his guest for a whole year at Fiesole appears from Matteo's own testimony. "Pico verò Mirandula in Fæsulano Abbas annum totum gavisus sum hospite, a Laurentio Mediceo mihi commisso; quo in loco otium ad sacrarum literarum maximè studia, linguamque Hebraicam perdiscendam, commodissimam sibi delegerat." *(De instituendo sapientiâ animo Lib.* viii.*)* Matteo was the confessor of Lorenzo. Sixtus IV. employed him in some transactions of importance, and would have raised him to the episcopal rank; but the good abbot declined this honour. He died at Padua, *anno* 1502. His literary productions consist of a work "De Instituendo Sapientiâ Animo," in eight books, printed at Bologna in 1495, with the addition of a discourse on our Lord's passion:—"De Veris et Salutaribus Animi Gaudiis," Florence, 1491: Some orations printed in the collection entitled "Recuperationes Fæsulanæ:" other smaller works enumerated by Maffei; and lastly, "Epistolar. Lib. iii." highly spoken of; Lib. i. published at Bologna in 1493, and containing 133 letters; Lib. ii. at Mantua, in 1498, which consists of 131 letters. This collection is said to contain an interesting letter to Poliziano on the subject of an ancient MS. of Ausonius, transmitted by Matteo to the former at his earnest instance. The third book saw the light at Venice in 1502, in 4to. with the addition of some *sermoni*. His whole works, were published by P. Ambrosini, at Bologna, in 1627, with the exception of this third

ment. The habitation assigned to Picus appears to have been within the precincts of the monastery, and the worthy abbot was requested by Lorenzo to receive him under his special protection, and by his kind attentions to assist in rendering this new situation agreeable to so illustrious a guest. Picus continued an inhabitant of the monastery a whole year, during which time his chief attention was occupied in Hebrew studies, and those theological investigations to which they were subservient.

Whilst Picus, amidst these scenes so friendly to abstraction and literary investigation, devoted his more retired hours to such graver enquiries as had relation to the holy scriptures; his intervals of relaxation were spent in the society of Lorenzo, Ficinus, and especially of Politian, in whose philosophical, critical and poetical studies he took an active and pleasing interest. The visit of the last-mentioned scholar to Venice, which laid the foundation of his more immediate acquaintance with Hieronymus Donatus, and Hermolaus Barbarus, has already been noticed. Soon after his departure from that city, Hermolaus had addressed a letter to him, which contained strong assurances of regard for his person, and respect for his talents. Intreating Politian to pursue his studies, Hermolaus had observed that the ruinous and declining state of letters and the useful arts, loudly called for every possible exertion on the part of men of real

Politiani Ep. Lib. i. ep. 9.

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book of letters, which on account of its extreme rarity was unknown to that editor. *(Maffei ut supra.)*

abilities. "Accept me," says he, "for your associate in this important enterprize, or condescend to become mine. If I merit not so honourable an appellation, call me your servant: spontaneously—gladly—I volunteer my services. Such is my ardour to serve the cause of letters, that I would decline no labour, I would disdain no office however menial, in such a cause. Should I not rather say that no function pertaining to literature can be otherwise than honourable, ornamental, glorious, to the person who discharges it."

To this letter Politian had replied in language suitable to the occasion, and highly expressive of the sense which he entertained of the value of Ermolao's newly acquired friendship. After a return of compliments,—"I feel it" (added Politian) "less incumbent on myself to stand foremost in vindication of letters, however deplorable, however desperate their present situation may be, because I see few so fit to take the lead as yourself. Agamemnon doubts not that he should soon be master of Troy, had he but ten such counsellors as Nestor. Could I but serve under ten such leaders as Hermolaus, I should entertain no doubt of seeing both Grecian and Latian literature speedily emancipated from barbarism. I extol, I admire the fortitude which prompts you to hope in the midst of so much discouragement and despondency. Your confidence awakens mine; and to second your efforts is the height of my wishes."

A subsequent letter of Politian, written at a considerable interval of time after the preceding, and which is probably to be referred to the period now under our consideration, may

serve to illustrate the friendly regard which continued to subsist amongst these distinguished scholars, and that reciprocation of kind offices, in which they mutually vied with each other.

Polit. Ep. Lib. i. ep. 11.

Angelus Politianus, to Hermolaus Barbarus.

"You must attribute my long silence to your occupations rather than my own. By these I understand, not only your vigils spent in the pursuit of letters and wisdom, but your frequent embassies, and state employments. What could be more indecent than either loquaciously to disturb your devotions to the muses, or to break in with trifles upon your serious engagements. But I suffer not a day, scarce an hour to pass, without expatiating on the subject of your virtues, talents, and erudition; as my patron Lorenzo, and my friend Picus, not men, but heroes in my estimation, can attest. At one time, they listen with complacency and pleasure; at another, themselves enlarge upon this favorite topic; so that our liberal youth, and the whole circle of my friends, have formed the most exalted ideas of your character. My "Miscellanies" too, now on the eve of publication, whensoever, in the language of Horace, "dignus vindice nodus inciderit," appeal to your judgment, and that of Laurentius and of Picus, against the whole rabble of ignorance. But to come to the purport of my present letter: —my friend Francesco Gaddi of Florence, late ambassador at your court, has informed Lorenzo, that you wish him, if it be in his power,

to accommodate you with a correct copy of "Dioscorides."(*f*) He like a true friend of

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(*f*) Of this author Hermolaus left a Latin translation. The liberality with which persons of rank and erudition communicated to each other at this period their *Codices*, manuscripts, and the like remains of antiquity, for the advantage of the important cause of literature, is pleasingly illustrated by Foscarini, in his work "Della Letteratura Veneziana," p. 69, to the following effect:—At the commencement of the revival of letters, Venice teemed with Greek and Latin MSS. and many of the Venetian gentry began to form collections: amongst whom were Andrea Giuliano, Francesco and Zaccheria Barbaro, Marco Lippomano, Lionardo Giustiniano, Fantin Dandolo, Zaccheria Trivigiano *(il Vecchio)*, Giovanni Cornaro, Piero Miani, Lauro Quirini, &c. &c. who flourished about the termination of the fifteenth century. It was afterwards an object of consequence to literary investigation, to obtain access to, and liberty of examining and transcribing from these collections. Lorenzo de' Medici himself, in the formation of the Medicean library, was often obliged to the literary repositories of Venice. Angelo Poliziano had recourse for MSS. to Antonio Pizzamano, Girolamo Donato, Domenico Grimani, and Giovanni Lorenzo, all Venetians.

Lorenzo, he further observes, procured transcripts of many "dei Codici del Bessarione," and of others preserved in the public libraries of Venice, at which city he was permitted to keep a scribe for that purpose. Nay the senate occasionally indulged him by sending to Florence, for a limited time, some of those "Codices" of which he stood in need. We may add, that a like indulgence was freely granted by Lorenzo and the Florentines, to those whose rank and inclination qualified them to stand forward, as patrons and promoters of literature in other states; and not to mention those of Italy, it is well known that Matteo Corvino, king of Hungary, enjoyed, and eagerly availed himself of such a privilege. But to return to the testimony of Foscarini. "Pico," he adds, "had frequent recourse to Ermolao Barbaro for a similar purpose, as his letters evince. Nor did he pass by the literary friends of Barbaro, who were also for the greatest part, his own; men of great erudition, and rich in ancient MSS. viz. Antonio Calbo, termed in the letters of Ermolao, "Calvus," (per il costume di que' tempi, che cercava di conformare il nome al genio Latino,) Dome-

yours, and no less prompt, than qualified by his high station to oblige, instantly gave it

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nico Grimani, Girolamo Donato, and Tommaso Mezzo.

As the names of these scholars thus incidentally occur, any attempt to rescue their memories, at least from total oblivion, will not be thought unseasonable. Of Tommaso de Mezzo, Foscarini observes briefly, time has left no other memorial than two letters addressed to him by Giovanni Pico; "in una delle quali esalta sommamente la Favola Comica Latina, intitolata "Epirota," composta dal de Mezzo, e impressa *in Venezia per Bernardino di Celere di Luere l' anno* 1485. But he might have added, that Tommaso had inscribed one of his pieces to Picus; as appears from the first of these letters, which begins thus: "Quod fabellam tuam, et eam festivam quidem et concinnam, meo nomini nuncupaveris, indicio mihi fuit doctrinæ tuæ et singularis in me benevolentiæ, &c." Part of the second, which is still more illustrative of the friendly connection which subsisted between Pico and Mezzo, deserves also to be cited in the author's own words: "Solidius nunquam me oblectatum memini, quam nuper dum tuam "Epyrotam" legerem, fabellam proculdubiò facetissimam, cum argumenti festivitate tum styli eruditione priscas etiam comœdias provocantem . . . . . Digna profectò fuit quæ Hermolao Barbaro, nescio an tuo quam meo magis, nominatim dicaretur; cui uni omnes literatos tantum debere existimo, quantum vix debent antiquitati. Comœdiæ novæ, quam mihi polliceris, jam expectans inhio." After expressing a wish for his society, if it were practicable, and observing that he shall leave his present place of residence in about ten days, Picus thus proceeds: — "Interim a me comœdiæ materiam non expectes. Malo utrunque, e tuo penu promas, ut Thomam Medium, non *medium* sed *totum*, fabella sapiat. Vereor enim, ne obsequendo tibi hebetudo ingenii mihi jacturam faceret, et ex eo quod de nostro admitteret, ab opifice opus degeneraret. Apud me nihil est non expositum, insulsum, plebeium. At desiderant hæ comœdiæ nescio quid secretiorum rerum salsum, mordax, elegans, acutum, tibi tuique ingenii amœnitatibus peculiare, &c." These letters occur *ap. Epistolas Pici*, without note of place or date. *Oper. p.* 249.

Domenico Grimani, who afterwards attained the rank of cardinal, became conspicuous as a patron of letters. In the year 1509, he was visited by Erasmus, who relates the particulars of his reception, in one of his letters, with

in charge to me to attend to your request. The copy sent herewith is, in my judgment, no less estimable for its correctness than antiquity. After making the use of it which you intend, you will no doubt return it to me,—not merely uninjured, but greatly augmented in value and authority, by your excellent annotations. *Adieu.*"

The connection of Picus and Politian with Hermolaus, led to a similar intercourse with other Venetian scholars of the time, who were distinguished by their exertion of that influence which rank and fortune will always afford, for the furtherance of letters. Amongst these, besides others already noticed, were Antonio Pizzamano, Domenico Grimani, who was afterwards advanced to the dignity of a cardinal, and Giovanni Lorenzo; betwixt whom and our illustrious Florentines, an equal readiness subsisted to accommodate each other with the use of ancient manuscripts, and exchange kind offices of a literary nature. Nor is it this noble liberality of communication only, so remarkable in the restorers of learning, that we regard with interest. The minutest incidents in which such men were concerned, the evanescent sallies of wit that enlivened their occasional interviews, or even the playful

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interesting minuteness. *(Vide Ep.* 1175, *of the edition of his works by Le Clerc.)* To the same illustrious ecclesiastic, Erasmus inscribed his "Paraphrasis in Epistol. Pauli ad Romanos." On another occasion, we find him soliciting cardinal Grimani for a copy of "Origenis Commentaria in Psalmos;" a translation of which he had been urged to undertake by Warham, archbishop of Canterbury. *(See his Epistles Ad Dom. Grimanum: inter Ep. ejus.)*

frolics to which they could sometimes descend, when described by their own pens, will commend themselves to the scholar of other times, and be perused by him with a portion of the same pleasure with which they were recollected and recorded. These considerations may recommend the following letter, which will itself explain the occasion on which it was written.

Polit. Ep. lib. iv. ep. 7.

Angelus Politianus, to Antonius Pizamanus.

"What shall I say, learned sir, to you and Grimanus, (whom I may now term alike my friend and yours) for having in my presence paid a visit to Joannes Picus Mirandula, under fictitious names, country, and a thousand such like disguises?—when our conversation too, could dwell on no subject but yourselves, notwithstanding your own almost forcible efforts to give it some other turn. Did not even the silent and instinctive yearnings of nature urge you to throw off so unseasonable a mask, and reproach you for such false colours in the presence of friends? And could you still so persist in your wicked, though jocular purpose, —whilst we both enquired of you with such ardour, conversed with you about yourselves so earnestly and affectionately, under the persuasion that you were strangers and indifferent persons, as to preserve the same firmness or rather obstinacy of concealment? Oh! could you have forgone this unkind purpose, what embraces, what pleasure should we have mutually participated! What a day of triumph was lost to us, perhaps to yourselves also, by this disobliging, not to say cruel de-

ception! Your late confession, I must say, gave me but a partial gratification; since I at last discovered you only to experience the mortification of your immediate loss. However indeed, disposed to credit your welcome declaration, I scarcely dared to believe you the persons you really were; thinking that either I could not have before been so much imposed upon, or that they who avowed so gross a deceit, intended to deceive me anew: so that my mind, simple, unsuspecting, and a stranger to guile, was robbed even of this poor consolation. As fishes and birds once deluded, afterwards where the food invites, suspect the hook or birdlime; so, in consequence of your late imposition, what was really sincere and genuine appeared to me adulterated and artificial. Picus himself indeed once served me in a similar manner; but he carried not the imposture so far. Having introduced himself to me whilst I was in the country, like a temporary *Proteus*, under a feigned name, he diverted himself by turning the conversation upon his own character; and artfully endeavoured to draw from me my sentiments respecting himself. After he had, as he thought, carried the jest to a sufficient length, he spontaneously told me with a laugh, who he was; and the cloud of disguise being dissipated, I was permitted to enjoy without restraint the presence and conversation of my youthful friend,

"Et veras audire et reddere voces."

But so far did you transgress the bounds of moderation, that had not fortune caused me, returning from the country solely on your

account, to stumble upon you, I had almost said flying—on the very threshold—you would have departed silently, (which still excites my indignation,) and unrecognized by me, as gentlemen of Vicenza, and not of Venice; and instead of Pizamani and Grimani, Porticenses, or I know not who. But a truce to reproaches which are now too late, and can avail nothing. Friends must be allowed sometimes to illude friends; as the wisest men inform us, the gods themselves are wont to illude those mortals who are dearest to them. I come now to your very elegant letters, which our Lactantius faithfully delivered to myself and Picus respectively; or rather both to both; since whatsoever of the kind is addressed to the one, is in fact addressed to the other also. And in these, I must say, you have exerted every nerve of politeness; as if willing in your absence pleasingly to atone by the most ingenuous frankness, for the deception which you in person practised upon us. So much do your affection, politeness, and native suavity of disposition live, breathe, and display themselves in these letters, that your pen might seem less to have been dipped in ink, than in the innermost recesses of your bosom. Thus, as the Syracusan poet says, You have converted our former mortification into a source of pleasure and advantage. We regret indeed the brevity of your letters; but they have acquired an artificial length by our frequently repeated perusal of them. I possess too, other letters of yours, as well as of Grimanus, addressed to me about ten years ago; seeds truly worthy of being scattered as it were, by young men who were destined to gather such a plenteous har-

vest of erudition. And as lovers carefully preserve, each one the little present of his mistress, whether it be a ring, a bracelet, a handkerchief, or even a violet, a rose, or other flower,—so I not only treasure up with scrupulous care your letters and his, as the most estimable pledges of real affection, but frequently make them pass in review before me; reciting them—sometimes to myself, at others —to my friends; and thus refreshing my remembrance of you, renewing my affection, and frequently inviting you to my converse. I may therefore, with justice, request you will not cease to write to me, as it is a kindness by which I am so greatly benefitted. Rather let all the time which you can spare from more important studies, be bestowed on me; and gratify me at least with the employment of some of your leisure moments. It is a debt which you owe to my attachment, as well as to your own urbanity. I rejoice that Domenico Grimani is discharging so honourable an embassy. Yet I wish you may receive him safe back as soon as possible, that he may not be too long vacant from the muses; and that you may have the pleasure of embracing, saluting, and congratulating him in my name and your own,—ornamented as he deserves with many additional honours, for his services to his country. Concerning the manuscript, I forbear to press you; for I should err in supposing that my cause required with you such recommendation. I will only say, I long to see it, and that having with pleasure perused, and with care preserved it from injury, I will faithfully return it to you. Joannes Picus

Mirandula, who is as it were the Roscius of our literary theatre, intends, I believe, himself to answer your letter, the receipt of which afforded him so much pleasure. He has you and Grimanus as well as myself, fixed to his heart with a kind of "clavus trabalis." On all occasions he expatiates on the praises of both, — and occasions never fail to present themselves. I shewed yours to Laurentius Medices, who smiled as I related to him the whole deception. He found great fault with me, that I did not bring you and your friend when known, by force, if necessary, to his palace, that you might at your leisure examine the gems and antique vases in his possession, in which you said you took a pleasure. I observed in reply, that neither I, nor Hercules himself could be supposed a match for two. Be assured he esteems you both, and is desirous to encourage studies of this nature. Indeed he seems formed by birth, education, and habit, for every thing noble, every thing praise-worthy; and is in my opinion a no less deserving object of your curiosity, than those gems and vases, of which you first desired, but afterwards declined the inspection."

Polit. Ep. lib. i. ep. 15.

In the spring of the year 1488, the celebrated Roman professor Pomponius Lætus addressed a letter to Politian, transmitting to him likewise an imperfect Roman calendar and some other ancient remains found at Venosa, a city within the Neapolitan dominions, and the birth-place of the poet Horace. The Roman scholar professing his readiness to gratify the antiquarian curiosity of Politian with other communications of the same nature, proceeds to solicit his opinion concerning a passage of

Valerius Flaccus, (*g*) which (whilst he suspects the text to be corrupted) he confesses his own inability to understand or rectify, especially as he possessed no means of consulting a manuscript of Apollonius, who, he observes, might possibly unravel the mystery. "But on this head I am impatient for your exquisite judgment," says Pomponius, "which, in my opinion, all we who are professors of literature must of necessity venerate." He begs to be commended to Lorenzo and his son "unicis literarum fautoribus," from the former of whom he solicits some letters of recommendation for a friend; but contrary to the practice of Politian's other learned correspondents, he makes no mention of Picus. How far Pomponius was influenced by the invidious jealousy which the late intended disputations of the former had excited in the breasts of so many Roman doctors, must now be left to conjecture.

Amongst the various persons of erudition who adorned Florence at this period, and whose friendship was more particularly culti-

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(*g*) This passage in the copy of Pomponius stood as follows:

> Indigena æterni rupem Jovis: hinc tibi Mavors
> Dant virides post terga lacus: ubi deside mitrâ
> Foeta legat: partuque virum fovet ipsa soluto.

Politian, assisted by a parallel passage of Apollonius Rhodius, proposed the following emendation in his reply to Pomponius, (*Lib.* i. *ep.* 16.) to which succeeding critics have given the seal of approbation:

> Inde Genetæi rupem Jovis—hinc Tibarenûm
> Dant virides post terga lacus: ubi deside mitra
> Fœta ligat: partuque virum fovet ipsa soluto.

vated by Picus, were Roberto Salviati, (*h*) and the family of the Benivieni. The former, of whom mention has already occurred, was not less conspicuous for his rank than for his attachment to literature, if Politian's testimony be worthy of credit. "You" (says he) "Roberto, are so peculiarly fortunate, that the very office of praising you is that for which all the learned must contend, sensible that their judgment will be most highly extolled who praise you most. Nor does so vast an honour exceed your deserts. For such are your sedulous good offices towards their whole order, that instead of its being adulation to commend, it would be ingratitude to omit this duty. Persevere then in a conduct which will advance your renown beyond triumphs; for never shall those characters of glory be effaced, which proceed not merely from the ingenuity, but affection of men of erudition."

Lib. iv. ep. 10.

The Benivenii appear to have been at least four in number. Antonius, the eldest, was a physician: the second probably a physician also, and celebrated for his botanical researches: the third, Hieronymus, distinguished himself as a poet: the fourth, Politian describes as exhibiting at the age of fourteen the most promising talents and attainments. So much may be inferred from his verses to Antonius, written in the year 1472.

(*h*) Jacobus Salviatus was a scholar of Politian; he afterwards married a daughter of Lorenzo de' Medici; and to him Politian inscribed his "Rusticus." Roberto was probably the father of Jacobus, and of Julius, for whom Politian wrote the epigram entitled, "In poste cubiculi, &c." *(See Memoirs of Politian, p. 121, note d.)*

ANTONIO BENIVENIO MEDICO.

Ut sonipes geminas attollit Martius aures
Cum raucæ belli signa dedêre tubæ,—
Sic mihi languenti surgunt in pectore vires
Ingenii laudas cum monumenta mei.
Et meritò: neque enim, tanto sub judice tutus,
Pertimeo vulgi scommata vana rudis.
Nam quoniam stygiam facile est tibi pellere mortem,
Quam facile invidiæ frangere colla potes!
Felix cui liceat fati pervertere legem,
Quem propter cymbâ stet leviore Charon!
Stamina qui valeas invitâ nectere Parcâ
Atque animas vacuâ restituisse colo!
Felix grata domus Lycio Benivenia Phœbo
Cui sua concessit munera cuncta Deus.
Namque coronidem tibi cedere jussit Apollo,
Jussit et Hæmonium cedere Phylliriden.
Ast alius simili frater virtute recenset
Quæ medicam surgens herba ministret opem
Tertius Aoniis satur ille Hieronymus undis,
Ad querulam docto barbiton ore canit.
Bissenos alius modò cum transcenderit annos
Pectore jam canos vincit et ore senes, &c.

TO ANTONIUS BENIVENIUS.

As rous'd the generous courser from afar
Lists the hoarse trumpet and affects the war—
My energies of soul your praise inspires
And warms my bosom with ingenuous fires.
With conscious pride,—since you commend my song,
I'll spurn the invectives of the vulgar throng.
For skill'd alike to avert each destin'd wound—
The shafts of death, and envy you confound.

Blest be your art! that lighter bids to glide
The bark of CHARON o'er the Stygian tide;—
Protracts the task by sullen Sisters spun,
And renovates life's thread already run.
Blest is your house, on whom the Lycian pow'r
Sheds his best gifts in one redundant show'r!
Vouchsafes the honours of his learned choir,
And music more than wak'd the Orphean lyre.
Skill like thy own—thy SECOND SELF avails
To scan what healing pow'rs each herb conceals:
Their lov'd GIROLAMO the tuneful nine
Lead near their springs to quaff the draught divine:
Whilst he, your YOUNGEST HOPE, a child in years—
In thought—in eloquence—a sage appears.

Whilst Salviati, as will hereafter appear, was the zealous encourager of Pico's profound theological investigations, and an active instrument in bringing them before the public, Hieronymus Benivenius became more especially the friend of his bosom, the depositary of his religious and moral sensibilities, and all that congeniality of opinion and disposition can render one person to another.

The greater part of the Italian poems of Girolamo Benivieni may be considered as monuments sacred to morality and friendship. Of his Bucolics, (*i*) that which is entitled

(*i*) Of the rest of the Bucolics of Benivieni, that which is intitled "Lauro," is in praise of poesy. "Nemesi" in the first place, figuratively describes the tranquillity and repose of Florence, anno 1478;—secondly, the storm excited by the Pazzi, and the assassination of Giuliano de' Medici;—lastly, imprecates divine vengeance on the authors of it. "Atheon" deplores the death of Giuliano: "Laura" intimates the author's love of poesy from his childhood. The

"Varo e Daphne," is descriptive of his affection for Picus. The seventh eclogue bears his

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seventh eclogue, intitled "*Pico*," "contiene una scambievole cantilena et alterna contentione infra due eccellentissimi pastori, cioe infra el nostro Pico Joanni Principe Mirandolano, onde et essa egloga el suo nome sortisce, & Lauro cioe Lorenzo de' Medici. Canta ciascuno esuoi amori sotto varij figmenti e figurati concetti. Onde come in nome di Misona, che abominatione significa si damna ne loro canti figuratamente et eccludé lo amore inordinato di questi beni corruttibili & delle loro pestiferi volupta, cosi si laudano variamente & commendano, et in nome di Floria le virtu morali, et in nome di Pleona (che s' interpreta superabundantia) le supernaturali et divine, &c." The volume concludes with "Capitoli, Canzone, Sonetti et altri versi di Hieronymo Benivieni." (See the edition of his poems printed *in Vinegia*, 1518, *in* 8vo.)

Tiraboschi (*Stor. della Poesia Ital. Vol.* ii. *p.* 211, edition of Mr. Mathias, *in Londra*, 1803,) upon the authority of Varchi, assigns to Girolamo Benivieni the most conspicuous rank after Lorenzo de' Medici, and Politian in the restoration "Dell' Italiana Poesia." For ample notices concerning Girolamo and his works, the same critic refers to Mazzuchelli (*Scritt. Ital. tom.* ii. *par.* 2,) and cites some interesting lines (per dare un saggio del valor non ordinario di questa poeta) from a poem of his, entitled "Deploratoria," which occurs not in the collection before-mentioned. The little poems which follow, the one a translation of a Latin epigram, the other an original sonnet, afford no unpleasing specimen of the poetical talents of Benivieni, whose works at large would possess more interest at the present day, were they less tinctured with the mysteries of his favourite platonism.

Una Nympha, in similitudine d'una che dorma, scolpita in una fonte, cosi parla.

Mentre che io, et del loco ov' hor sono
Nympha, e custode del bel fonte, ascolto
El murmurio de le sacre onde el suono,
In dolce somno ho l' occhio el cor mio involto.
Tu se alcun vieni al mio fonte, un dono
Ti chiegio, ò bei, ò el tuo candido volto
Lavi, 'l dolce mio sonno, e la mia pace
Non turbar priego; bei, lavati, e tace.

name, but all are deeply tinged with the mysteries of the platonic philosophy. The *Can-*

Inscription for a Fountain, ornamented with the representation in sculpture of a Nymph sleeping.

Whilst I, the Nymph that o'er these haunts preside,
Held here my watch to guard my favourite tide,
The sacred waters' softly murmuring sound
In sweet, oblivious sleep my senses bound.
Whoe'er thou art that hither com'st to lave,
Or quench thy thirst in this translucent wave,
Respect my slumbers, this kind tribute pay,—
Drink, lave in silence, and pursue thy way.

Nella morte della Falchetta de Rinuccini.

Dimmi ove sono, sono hora Falchetta
L' alme bellezze tue celeste & nuove ?
Dove son gliocchi, i tuoi belli occhi, dove
Amor havea sua prima sede eletta ?
Dove l' eburneo collo, ove la eretta
Cervice hor jace, et chi l' inclina & muove ?
Dove 'l candido sen, ond' anchor piove
Nel tuo sposo ogn' hor qualche saetta ?
L' alme bellezze mie ch' in quest' inferma
Carne per far delle su' eterne sede
Havèa qui 'l ciel mirabilmente accolto
Polver & ombra son, dov' hor si vede
Chiaro quanto quel cor sia cieco & stolto
Ch' in lor com' in suo fin si posa & ferma.

On the death of Falchetta de Rinuccini.

Oh say Falchetta ! whither now is fled
That aspect with angelic beauties bright,
Those eyes, e'erwhile Love's throne,—his chief delight
Wherein to lurk,—and whence his shafts he sped ?
Where makes that polish'd neck its lowly bed,
Inert and prostrate ? where of snowy white
The enchanting breast,—that on your spouse's sight
Each passing hour some sweet attraction shed ?

zona of Girolamo Benivieni "Dello Amore Celeste e Divino," which enters deeply into the doctrine of that refined affection as defined by the platonic school, is illustrated with an elaborate and appropriate commentary by Picus himself; and with the exception of one short metrical composition, is the only performance of his in the Italian language which has reached our times; but with the precise period when it was written, we are not acquainted. (*k*)

The year 1489 was characterized by the publication of two works, very different indeed in their nature, but both, if we may credit the testimony of numerous writers, received with great encomiums by the learned of the age. These were the "MISCELLANEA" of Angelus Politianus, and the "HEPTAPLUS" of Joannes Picus Mirandula. Not-

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Ah me! those charms, my perishable frame
To adorn, which heav'n had lent but to resume,
And wond'rous, in one semblance fair combin'd,
Are dust and mere illusion:—for the bloom
Of frailty, mortal! never was design'd
To form thy enduring good, thy bliss supreme.

Amongst the lighter productions of Benivieni's muse, may also be enumerated his "Cantico in Laude di Dante Alighieri Poeta Fiorentino," and his "Amore Fugitivo di Mosco," translated from the Latin version of Politian. *(Vide Opere di Benivieni: ut supra.)*

(*k*) This work, entitled "Commento dello Illustrissimo Signor Conte Joanni Pico Mirandolano sopra una Canzona d' Amore, composta da Girolamo Benivieni Cittadino Fiorentino secondo la mente & oppenione de Platonici," is not unknown to modern times, and a translation of the poem and commentary may be found in *Stanley's History of Philosophy, page* 196, *folio, third edition, Lond.* 1701.

Salviati on this subject, asserts that he has devoured rather than perused it. "So young

Operum Pici, pag. 267.

Picus at Padua, writing from Venice, *(Cal. Oct.* 1489.*)* says "Non me latet, neque unquam latuit dum Patavii vitam degeres, quanta esset ingenii tui præstantia, quanta fecunditas,"—qualities which he affirms, Picus had evinced as well on numerous other occasions, as in this most learned work. Hieronymus Donatus, acknowledging the present of the Heptaplus, terms it a species of composition with which he is highly delighted, "quod non aliunde uberiorem segetem video" (says he) "et doctrinæ et eruditionis quam in sacris literis." Baptista Guarinus expresses himself thus: "Tuum ad me munusculum . . . . . per nostri auditorii halcedonia perlegi omnia, relegi, &c. . . . Perge his monumentis cum de reliquis literatis tum de sacræ philosophiæ studiosis, quæ vera est germanaque philosophia existimanda bene mereri, teque eripere morsibus edacis ævi, &c." *Nov.* 1489. *Ex Ferrarâ.*" Christophorus Landinus, in a letter to Salviatus, expatiates at great length on the merits of the Heptaplus, and in the most exuberant and enthusiastic language. Bartholomæus Fontius expresses his obligations to Salviatus for a similar present; and sends him in return an oration which he had a short time previously addressed in public to Matthias Corvinus, king of Hungary, with a request that it might also be submitted to the perusal of Picus, whom he terms the most learned person of the age. See also the letter of Picus to an anonymous friend, to whom, presenting a copy of his work, he thus expresses himself: "Si libros, quasi liberos parimus, et patris maxima pars in filio est, veniam ego quoque ad te in illo quem genui. Excipe igitur venientem ad te filiolum meum, ut me solebas, hilaris et lubens, &c." *(Pici Epistolar. p.* 254. *Ejusd. Ep. B. Guarino, p.* 260, *et epp. ejus passim.)*

In the "Heptaplus," or "Hexameron," as it is sometimes denominated, which Hermolaus Barbarus professes to have received by the friendly attentions of Salviatus, and to have read with an avidity that scarce allowed him time to breathe, that scholar declares himself delighted with three obvious particulars: first, that Picus with the didactic style, had combined the hortatory and pathetic, agreeably to the manner of the sacred writers, as well as that of the Pythagoreans and Platonists in their philosophical productions; whilst the moderns were too apt to confine themselves to the didactic only. Secondly,—that amidst materials so various,

a man!" he exclaims, "yet connecting himself in erudition with the most celebrated fathers of the church! What is not such a person capable of becoming, if length of years be granted him in proportion to his talents! What gratification may we not expect from the Psalms and poetical works of David, in the elucidation of which he has been long employed, exploring with infinite research all that Latin, Greek and Hebrew authors have written on the subject; and for the completion of which work, I have the happiness to say, he has chosen the solitude of our monastery at Fiesole. To behold him, to listen to him, is the height of felicity."

Whatever might be the theological errors of Picus, errors to be ascribed rather to the time and to accidental circumstances, than to the individual, the various testimonies in favour of the "Heptaplus" will certainly be perused with satisfaction in their original form, as so many proofs that amidst a general enthusiasm for the study of the ancients and what is termed profane literature, which has almost

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involved the age in the suspicion of infidelity, scholars of the greatest eminence really felt, if they were not grossly and unnecessarily disingenuous, the superiour importance of those investigations which appertain to religion and the sacred scriptures.

It can scarcely however, be productive of any valuable purpose, very minutely to inquire into the merit of a work which the tacit consent of posterity has consigned to almost total oblivion. Picus, it must be acknowledged, intermixes much of platonism in his theological writings. They are also tinctured with the fancied doctrines of the Jewish Cabbala; and this is particularly observable in the work in question. A celebrated writer of modern times observes, that Picus relied greatly upon the "philosophia domestica et esoterica" of the Jews, which they endeavoured to conceal with a jealous solicitude; and from the high importance which he attached to it was willing to purchase their mysterious books at a great price; but adds, that his eagerness to penetrate these hitherto unexplored *arcana* blinded his judgment, and he unfortunately became the dupe of Hebrew craft and imposture. The "LXX. Libri Cabbalistici," which he mentions having bought from a Sicilian Jew for an immense sum, and considered as the genuine collection of Ezra, have been by later writers pronounced a fraudulent and suppositious compilation, artfully interpolated, and adapted to afford a seeming confirmation of the mysteries of christianity as maintained by the church of Rome. (*n*) Hence Picus is

Vide Morhofii Polyhistor Literar. Tom. ii. lib. i. c. 7. p. 16. Lubec. 1747, in 4to.

Pici. oper. in Apol. pag. 82.

Brucker Histor. Critica Philosophiæ, tom. iv. parte i. pag. 55 et seqq.

(*n*) Speaking of this fraud practised upon the credulity

pronounced to have been ignorant of the real doctrines of the Jewish Cabbala, and to have

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of Picus, " In has casses" (says Brucker) " incidisse Picum mirum non est; cum in Academiâ Medicæâ platonismum recentiorem didicisset, et cum Cosmo atque Ficino toties platonicè fuisset philosophatus." Brucker is here guilty of a strange anachronism in making Picus hold philosophical conversations with Cosmo de' Medici.

From the " Theses Cabbalisticæ," collected by Buddeus, from the works of Picus " ad oculum patebit" (says the same writer) " ignorâsse Picum quid sit Cabbala, quodque philosophiæ genus illa constituat. Definit enim, &c. . . . . Quod verò majus et ferè intolerabile est, præpostero sacrarum doctrinarum cum Cabbalisticis comparandarum et conciliandarum studio seductus, ubique miscet quadrata rotundis, sana venenatis, pulchra deformibus. . . . . Idem in philosophiâ quam secutus est Platonicâ præstitit. Syncretismo enim pestilenti, quem recentiores platonici introduxerant, et Græci exules in Cosmi domum, et ad ipsum quoque Ficinum perduxerant, correptus, et lepido seductus præjudicio veram et divinam philosophiam Platonismum exhibere, Platonicorum placita Mosi aliisque viris sanctis tribuit; et ut semel complectamur, ineptè miscet omnia, et Cabbalistica, Pythagorica, Platonica, Aristotelica, Judaica, Christiana, inter se miserè confundit." Respecting also Picus's favourite design of reconciling the platonic and aristotelic philosophy, " de Syncretismo quem inter Platonem et Aristotelem instituit," *(Brucker)* which was the object not only of his treatise " De Ente et Uno," but of a much larger work, often mentioned by him as occupying his attention, but which being left imperfect never appeared; it may suffice to remark once for all, that it is not surprizing he should have formed such a scheme, " cum" (says Brucker) " Platonicorum recentiorum ille semper mos fuerit: Picus autem teste Politiano *(in Ep. p. 326.)* primò quidem Aristotelem secutus sit, et ab eo demùm ad Platonicos transierit." *(Hist. Crit. Phil. ut supra.)* " Of the " Heptaplus" of Picus," (says Sixtus Senensis) *(in Bibliothecâ Sanctâ)* " various have been the opinions of the learned. Whilst it has been extolled by some as a work of profound erudition, it has been condemned by others as an ostentatious display of juvenile vanity concealing, beneath a specious exteriour, a mere pompous inanity. On a late occasion at Rome, I took the liberty of asking that most excellent prelate Aloysius Lippomanus,

erred even in his definition of the term. Nor was he more fortunate in his platonism; having imbibed that corrupt species of it which originated in the Asiatic and Alexandrine schools, the Syncretism, to which the more recent platonists gave birth, which was introduced by the Grecian exiles into the establishment of Cosmo de' Medici, and deeply tinging the notions and writings of Ficinus, infected the whole platonic academy of Florence.

Amidst these graver pursuits Picus had not yet formed the austere resolution of totally abjuring all converse with the muses. He acquaints Andreas Corneus, that his poems are withheld, for the present only, from seeing the light, in order that by a careful revisal they may be rendered more fit to meet the public eye. At this time, he observes, that he has little leisure to attend to their correction; being closely and urgently employed in a commentary upon the Psalms of David, and in vindicating and defending the translation of them used by the church; which having been principally taken from the Septuagint version, the Jews charged with varying in

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bishop of Verona, why among so many noble authors inserted in his "Catenæ," he had made no mention of so distinguished a person as Joannes Picus of Mirandula: the good bishop, turning to me with much earnestness of countenance and manner, replied, "When I compiled my "Catena in Genesin," I selected those authors who explained the thoughts and language of Moses, in a natural and apposite manner. Finding therefore that Picus is merely intent upon clothing the sentiments of platonism, or rather his own reveries with the Mosaic phrase and diction, I considered his works as utterly foreign from my purpose."

more than six hundred places from the Hebrew original. "This office" (he adds) "I have undertaken at the earnest request of Lorenzo de' Medici." Operum pag. 259.

At this season the publication of Politian's "Miscellanea" had attracted to that scholar the notice and congratulations of the most learned men of the age: and his moments of respite from severer application, were fully occupied in answering the friendly and flattering epistles received from all quarters in consequence of their appearance: and it is remarkable that scarcely any of the complimentary letters of his correspondents fail to make the most encomiastic mention of Picus, whose praise Politian was proud to identify as it were with his patron's and his own. Antiquarius earnestly entreats by Politian's means to be recommended to his friendship. Franciscus Benedictus, probably secretary to the Venetian embassy at Milan, speaking of the malevolence of Merula, and his idle threats to attack and expose the critical labours of Politian, says, "after repeatedly endeavouring, by reasoning and argument, to bring him to a more friendly temper,—I told him he ought to consider with whom he would have to contend, should he persist in his purpose, not merely with Politian, a veteran soldier, but with Picus too, whom you justly denominate the Phœnix of literature; and in short, with the whole Florentine academy, who, from their attachment to sound learning, would no doubt strenuously espouse the cause of Politian. For he threatened to transcribe the invective, which he has prepared, in order to its speedy publication: but, Antiquar. Politiano Lib. iii. ep. 20.

Lib. vi. ep. 8. "Parturient montes; nascetur ridiculus mus!"

Politian is no less jocular than his correspondent on this occasion. As Merula, says he, who was once my particular friend, is now preparing to criminate me, no doubt from motives not of envy but conviction, I wish he may cry out as soon as possible, "Juno Lucina fer opem!" and if need be, "Egomet quoque obstetrix accurram."

Ibid. ep. 9.

Respecting the completion of Picus's "Commentary on the Psalms," nothing satisfactory is upon record: but at the commencement of the year 1490, he certifies Baptista Mantuanus, that he is diligently employed upon his favourite object of reconciling Plato and Aristotle. "To this work," says he, "I daily devote the whole of my morning hours: the afternoon I give to the society of friends, those relaxations which are requisite for the preservation of health, and occasionally to the poets and orators, and similar studies of a lighter kind: my nights are divided betwixt sleep and the perusal of the holy scriptures." Thus systematical was Picus in the distribution of his time and studies; whilst, as he observes to another of his correspondents, his friend and associate, Politian, could bear him witness that he considered the one and the other happily employed, only in proportion as they were rendered conducive to his own moral improvement."

Pici oper. pag. 243.

In the same year, upon the decease of Marcus Barbus, nephew of Paul II. and a member of the college of cardinals, who had long held the patriarchate of Aquileia, Hermolaus Barbarus was nominated by Pope In-

nocent VIII. to this vacant dignity. At this period Hermolaus resided as ambassador from his native city at the pontifical court. His inconsiderate acceptance of this honour drew upon him the severest resentment of his country, on two accounts: first, because their laws forbade any Venetian citizen exercising a diplomatic mission to assume the clerical character; and secondly, because they considered this appointment, made by the pope without their privity, as a direct infringement of a right which they had been accustomed to exercise, of nominating to the patriarchate. The exaltation of Hermolaus therefore, though a subject of temporary joy to his friends, proved to that scholar a real and severe calamity. Amongst those who, without duly weighing the consequences of this event, hastened with all the eagerness of friendship to congratulate the new patriarch, were Picus and Politian. The latter, in an epistle addressed to him on the occasion, gave utterance to his feelings in the following language. "Words cannot express, my Hermolaus! with what joy Laurentius Medices lately informed me, as I sate at dinner with him, of your appointment to the patriarchate of Aquileia. As to myself, (for why should I dissemble a well known fact?) so enraptured was I with the tidings, as actually to leap and dance around the tables, (in ipso discubitu) exclaiming like a person beside himself, at the happy news. And now, I sincerely congratulate you, my Hermolaus! I congratulate all the learned, I congratulate the age. You, on having received this new and public testimony (shall I call it?) or remuneration of your virtues; since

Bembi Histor. Veneta. lib. i. p. 18. Lutet. 1551, in 4to.

though you have heretofore been distinguished with numerous and highly ornamental honours, this far excels the rest; not merely as being greater or different in kind, but as a step which it is thought must shortly lead to your still higher exaltation. I congratulate the learned, because this high dignity has been conferred on you in particular, who have ever been a favourer of such, and attached to their pursuits. Sprung from the noblest ancestry, educated in the midst of wealth and splendour, having filled the most honourable stations and attained the very summit of almost every species of erudition, you make us, who are either professors or students of the liberal sciences, though for the most part little distinguished by wealth or fortune, so much the objects of your affection and complacency, that you condescendingly lower as it were, alike to us all, the *fesces* and *insignia* of your dignity. I congratulate the age, because it has witnessed an event, worthy of being contrasted with any, either of past or succeeding times; forasmuch as fortune, hitherto blind, may now be said to have recovered her sight; since she delights to load with honours a person in whom almost all the virtues unite in a kind of audible harmony. Though still therefore, more honourable, and in my judgment more happy, in your merits than in the reward of them; yet you owe it both to the times and to the cause of letters, not to be wanting either to your own fortune or to our wishes; but to press forwards, and to improve to the utmost the favour which you possess; I mean not by cringing solicitations, which are disgraceful to a philosophic mind, but rather by

those arts which procure you the love of good men and the admiration of all. For my part, though my suffrage can benefit you in no other way, I will invariably render you one service,—by omitting no opportunity either of celebrating your merit, or of conciliating and soliciting for you the good will of others." Polit. Ep. lib. i. ep. 13.

To this letter of Politian, Hermolaus replied,—"In having conceived a joy so much beyond what might be imagined on account of my good fortune, you have done nothing new, nothing that I did not foresee and anticipate. I am fully sensible of that excessive partiality which leads you to infer the propriety of taking upon yourself the difficult and perplexed office of ornamenting and extolling my name; of the constancy and intense perseverance which you have always shewn in this particular,—how entirely you consider my concerns united with your own, whence it is less surprising that you should deem those means which are beneficial to mine, equally so to yours. I do, and always shall confess myself infinitely obliged to you, not only as to an affectionate friend, but as to Politian: that is, to a person of consummate erudition. The praises of Politian are more valuable than as the praises of a mere friend. The suffrage and judgment of friendship are liable to error; but those of Politian, however affectionate, cannot err. To Laurentius, who is equally your princely patron and mine, I feel the number and magnitude of my obligations daily increasing: a fact which he can himself attest. Under the accumulated pressure of his many kindnesses, I fear I am in great danger of appearing little better than an ingrate and a barbarian." Inter Polit. Ep. lib. i. ep. 14.

To gratulations not less sincere on the part of Picus, Hermolaus modestly replies, that he cannot but feel himself pleased even with that excess of esteem, on the part of his friends, which prompts them to over-rate his deserts. No event, he observes, however prosperous, would afford him such sincere pleasure, as to pass his days in the society of Picus, and in conversing with him upon the philosophy of nature, and the sublime topics of morality and religion. "If you have heretofore, he adds, indulged towards me sentiments of complacency and benevolence, let me still, I intreat you, continue, if possible more than ever, to share your esteem; and let the affection which you testified for Hermolaus the Pagan, glow with redoubled warmth towards the newly enlisted soldier of Christ." It is but just, to observe that this celebrated man manifested a temper equally firm and becoming in his subsequent adversity. When he saw his own advancement counteracted by his unrelenting countrymen, and when, he himself labouring under the weight of their severe displeasure, his father Zacharias had fallen a sacrifice to his grief, on account of those adverse events, which he had vainly endeavoured to alleviate; then it was that Hermolaus, conscious of the rectitude of his own intentions, reduced his past speculations to practice, and found himself supported by the consolations of philosophy and religion. In an epistle to a friend on the subject of his "Castigationes Plinianæ," after observing that in this laborious undertaking, there was scarce an author whom he had not read, in order to give authority to his lucubrations,—that he had discovered and cor-

Inter Polit Ep. Lib. xii. ep. 38.

Ibid. Ant. Calvo. Lib. xii. ep. 26.

rected not fewer than five thousand errors in the text of Pliny, some of which were of a very ancient standing, and thus subdued monsters, less formidable indeed, but far more numerous, than Hercules himself. "Allow," he proceeds to say, "a jest from your friend, at a time when some feeble-minded reasoners think I ought to do nothing but mourn my misfortunes. Some think that a cheerful face ill becomes the unfortunate. Some perhaps are offended with the constancy of my temper. The injurers are much more uneasy than the injured. Nothing could have been so valuable or so grateful as this strength of mind with which God has endued me, and which qualifies me to bear my reverses, not merely with temper, but with pleasure. — I make no complaints; I ask nothing;—I entertain no resentments; I accuse no man. Peace, hilarity and thanksgivings are my sleeping and waking consolations. I will not say my persecutors, but those who suffer no persecution, can scarcely be more at ease. But this ease is neither stupor nor insensibility, pride nor contempt. It proceeds from a due estimate of the value of temporal possessions, and a preparation for my latter end. If the things so anxiously contended for in this life, were great in themselves, their magnitude would be diminished by the shortness of their duration: if they are at best but trifles, I leave you to draw the inference." Writing upon another occasion to the same correspondent, he expresses himself thus: "My fortitude, you may say, proceeds from the hope that this storm will soon blow over, and my enemies become my friends. It proceeds, I assure you,

from no such expectation. Fortitude grounded on such hopes would be no fortitude. He is a man of fortitude who feels his misfortunes and bears them: so bears them, as looking to their continuance, and flattering himself with no expectations of redress. To bear evils under the presumption of future redress, would at best be but a kind of compromise too mercenary and imperfect to deserve the name of genuine fortitude. Yet in separating expectation from fortitude, I would not be understood to mean that which is implied in the scripture expression, "It is good to trust in the Lord;" but that alluded to in the passage, "Cursed is he that putteth his trust in man, and maketh flesh his arm." In fine, on a further occasion alleging, as one source of consolation, the purity of his motives in taking upon him the office of patriarch, which far from soliciting, he had accepted with reluctance, and almost by compulsion; "Fortune!" says Hermolaus, "I accuse you not. If you intended the present as a great calamity, you have deceived yourself. If you meant to exercise my patience, to try my fortitude hitherto not called into action, I give you thanks. . . . . But supposing my misfortunes to have been greater than they are, what a resource, what consolation had I in store—in those studies with which I have been familiar from my youth! While health and reason are left, what mishap can befal me powerful enough to abstract me from letters? While these remain to me, my life cannot but be tranquil, agreeable, illustrious. Born in the midst of letters, devoted to letters, I cannot exist without them: but the things which are

Inter Polit. Ep. Lib. xii. ep. 28.

an hindrance, an interruption to them, I can readily dispense with. I have sustained various and high offices in the republic, with what integrity and reputation let others determine. I regret not to say, that twelve years of my life have been devoted to such occupations;—eight of these entirely: all this time has however, been in a manner lost to letters. Oh happy calamity! which has restored them to me—me to them—Hermolaus to himself. Happy misfortune! to which I owe my peace. Auspicious storm! that hath driven me into a secure haven. If tranquillity be the object of my search, letters shall bestow it: if glory—letters: if other things generally deemed desirable, which I partly possess in a sufficient degree and partly despise, —letters. State honours are the admiration of politicians merely: literary fame excites the laudable ambition of all mankind."

Inter Polit. Ep. Lib. xii. ep. 29.

About this juncture Nicolaus Leonicenus, in a complimentary espistle addressed to Politian on the subject of his "Miscellanea," makes mention of Picus in terms very illustrative of the veteran scholar's esteem for the latter. "From your works I learn that in your tender years you had the felicity of imbibing the platonic and aristotelic doctrines from preceptors of the highest reputation; and that you now enjoy the society of Picus, our dear and never sufficiently to be commended prince, by a participation of whose studies, you will soon attain to the same preeminence in wisdom, which you already possess in oratory and poetry. Did I not highly esteem you both and feel myself so much indebted to you, I should envy your good for-

tune who have the happiness of thus pursuing your philosophical inquiries in honourable leisure: and that too in the most flourishing state of Italy, and under Lorenzo de' Medici, and Piero his son, the most distinguished patrons of learning and virtue of the age. Happy should I think myself to be accounted worthy of participating in your studies. If circumstances would permit, I should rejoice to live and die with you. What gratification could existence afford more delightful or desirable than to associate with persons so amicable, and at the same time so upright, so learned as you. But I will yet flatter myself with the fond hope of passing with you the residue of my declining years; not only for the sake of your very agreeable society, but also that we may unite our efforts in behalf of the perishing cause of learning; should I not say for the very existence of our fellow-men, whom the prevailing ignorance

"ἀιδεὶ προιαπτει."

"How I wish," (replies Politian after speaking of Picus in his usual terms of eulogy) "that you were personally united with us, and shared as it were the same dwelling. The Muses, if such personages are yet in existence, would then, I am persuaded, migrate hither with all their shades and fountains; and under such leaders as yourself and Picus, the armies of barbarism, which now triumphantly elevate their standards in token of almost universal dominion, would speedily be put to flight."

Polit Ep. Lib. ii. epp. 3, 4.

While separately, or in conjunction with Politian Picus thus kept up an intercourse with other scholars of the age; Philippus Be-

roaldus of Bologna appears to have again participated in his epistolary attentions. The letter of Picus is not preserved; but that of Beroaldus in answer is yet upon record, and merits observation not only for the more than sober praise which he so freely lavishes upon his youthful correspondent, but also as being peculiarly characteristic of the author's disposition and style. (*o*) It bears date, *vi. Id.*

(*o*) PHILIPPUS BEROALDUS JOANNI PICO MIRANDULANO, S.

"Cœnaturus apud Minum Roscium, qui in studiis literarum est politissimus, et senatûs nostratis maximum ornamentum, lectitabam Plautinas fabulas urbanissimis salibus scaturientes, cum mihi literæ tuæ allatæ fuerunt oppidò quam literatæ, quam tersæ, quam emunctæ, statimque seposito comico lepore, lepidissima tua scripta festinanter legere incœptavimus: Dii boni! quantum in illis venustatis, quantum eruditionis, quantum majestatis inesse cognovimus. Magna Joann. Picum fama præcesserat, major inventus est; nihil protritum, nihil triviale resonant tuæ scriptiones. Res verbis, verba rebus adamussim quadrant. Latinè loqueris et purè, elocutione uteris splendidâ atque magnificâ, dialecton habes plenam jucunditatis atque candoris, supellectilem verborum optimorum copiosissimam, sententias crebras atque rotundas, tam luculentè tam eleganter animi sensa depromis, ut uni tibi Dii immortales dedisse videantur, quod quam paucissimis dederunt, videlicet optima sentire et optima dicere, idque non minus versu quam prosa oratione complecteris. Scribunt Livius et Homerus prope divinitus, non omnia uni Deos tribuisse; hinc est quod sæpe legimus alios eloquentiâ præstantes, alios eruditione præditos floruisse, paucissimos verò, et eloquentes et eruditos simul extitisse. Hinc duo Romanæ linguæ culmina, Terentius Varro, & M. Cicero, referuntur, a quorum altero rerum, altero verborum doctrina petebatur: Alter doctissimus undecunque a Terentiano, alter eloquentissimus ab omnibus nuncupatur: Virgilium, ut inquit optimè Seneca, illa felicitas ingenii solutâ oratione destituit; Cicero carmina scriptitavit nullâ venere, nulloque lepore, musis scilicet invitis atque repugnantibus.

Tu vero et doctissimus es et eloquentissimus. Tu prosâ

Mar. 1491. about which time, or soon afterwards, Picus probably completed his treatise,

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polles et versu; scribis legenda, calles scribenda. Tu Musarum alumnus meritò potes nuncupari, qui non ut multi, unam alteramve crateram musicam ebibisti, sed tanquam alter Apuleius, epotâsti crateras omnis, et in primis illam philosophiæ limpidam atque nectaream quam paucissimi primoribus vix labris attingunt, vixque a limine salutant. O magna fœcunditas animi!—O immortalis ingenii beatissima ubertas, quæ iu Pico Mirandulano adhuc puero, adhuc ephœbo, tantas virtutes excudit, tam multijugas disciplinas infudit, tantas animi dotes inseruit, qui ætate tyrunculus est, eruditione veteranus. Perge, vir doctissime, quo cœpisti: —effice, ut crescentibus annis scientia augeatur, ingenium adolescat, memoria fiat vegetior, atque adminiculatior. Qui in juventâ es nostri seculi decus et virtutis exemplum, qualis es futurus in senectâ!

Papinianus a Spartiano juris asylum et doctrinæ legalis thesaurus nominatur. Tu a nobis asylum ingenuarum disciplinarum nuncupaberis, tu nobis quoties abditum quippiam in literis interioribus occurret, thesaurus eris, imò ut verius loquar, jam nunc thesaurus es. Omnia etiam penitissima in literis tibi sunt ad manum, omnia præstò occurrunt, orbis ille doctrinæ qui laudatur a doctis tibi in famulatu esse videtur. Tibi Græcæ Latinæque literæ ancillantur. Tibi licet ingenium, nunc hâc nunc illâ meditatione vegetare: altera enim alterius est condimentum.—Et ut terras varia ac mutata semina recreant atque reficiunt, ita mutatio studiorum animos refovet ac amœnat. Tibi licet ingenium dulcioribus pöetices studiis exhilarare, si quando austerioribus philosophiæ dogmatibus fatiscit. Tu denique in arce stas atque fastigio bonarum disciplinarum, cum nos in primo vix clivo sudemus. Tu gradatoris gradu arctam virtutis viam conscendisti, nos testudineo ac formicino incessu conscendere conamur, et in confragosis callibus laboramus, subinde labantes, subinde nutabundi, ac titubantes.

Scribo quod sentio, sentio quod scribo, calamus cum mente concordat. Incredibili desiderio afficior te unà cum Politiano visendi, cui desiderio intra paucissimos dies faciam satis: nam Minus Roscius qui literatorum omnium est amantissimus, qui nos ambos potissimùm miro amore prosequitur, feriis hisce paschalibus isthuc venturus est ad vota solvenda. Ego hominem comitabor, tunc dextram copulare vicissim licebit, et mutuo colloquio frui. Tunc ego literator et gramma-

entitled "De Ente et Uno." (*p*) Of the object of this work, some idea may be formed from the preliminary address to Politian,—for to him Picus inscribed it. "You lately communicated to me a conversation which passed betwixt yourself and Laurentius Medices on the subject of my present treatise; when, espousing the cause of Plato, he disputed with you against Aristotle, whose "Ethics" have been this year the subject of your public lectures: for so multifarious and comprehensive are the talents of our illustrious friend, that he seems equal to every undertaking. What indeed I most of all admire in him, is that although continually occupied in affairs of state, he is constantly meditating upon, or discussing some literary subject. And whereas those who think that Aristotle dissents from Plato, differ in opinion from me; you enquired of me how Aristotle might be best vindicated upon this question, and reconciled with Plato his master. I returned you such an answer as occurred to me at the moment; rather confirming the arguments which you had urged to Lorenzo, than furnishing any

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tista vos literatissimos adibo, alloquar, salutabor, tunc ego qui hìc sapere videor, isthic fortasse mussabo, vel tanquam anser inter olores clangore obstrepere personabo. Interea vale literarum asylum, meque mutuò ama et Politianum desideratissimum meo nomine saluta. *Bononiæ, 6. Idus. Mart.* 1491." *(Vide Oper. Pici. p. 272.)*

(*p*) "Inter tot juges divinæ legis evolutiones, secundo anno ab Heptapli editione opusculum etiam de Ente et Uno decem capitibus distinctum absolvit: breve quidem corpore sed amplum viribus, &c." *(Vit. ejus a Joan. Francisco, Nepote ejus script.)*

new ones of my own. Not satisfied with this, though you know me to have it in view (in a more extensive work, upon which I am at present employed) to shew the agreement of Plato and Aristotle; you earnestly solicit me briefly to commit to writing the principal arguments which I adduced to you in person, upon the before-mentioned occasion, and when, if I am not mistaken, our friend Domenicus Benivenius was also present, who is endeared to us both, as well by his erudition as integrity. To Politian, whom I may term my almost inseparable associate, I can refuse nothing, especially of a literary nature. Permit me however, the use of some terms which to you, who have signalized yourself as the vindicator of classical Latinity, may possibly appear unsanctioned with the freedom of Rome, but which the novelty of the subject and a species of necessity have extorted from me; and forbear to exact the graces of style where, as Manilius says,

Pici oper. pag. 159.

"Ornari res ipsa negat, contenta doceri."

Politian professed himself highly gratified by this mark of respect on the part of his friend, and even expressed his persuasion, that the circumstance of thus having his name united with a production of Picus, would ensure him that immortal reputation which he had always aspired after, but despaired of obtaining by his own works. "In your treatise "De Uno et Ente," (says he) "you recal the streams that flow down through the Lyceum and the Academy to their true source, and with philosophy, which is not two-fold, but one and unvarying, you combine our own theology.

Why should I any longer covet the herb of Glaucus, destined as I am to survive to immortality not only by your means, but with you? Posterity shall hereafter make mention that such a person as Politian once existed; and that Picus, the glory of his age, esteemed him so highly as to inscribe to him this sublime monument of his genius." (*q*) Inter Polit. Ep. lib. xii. ep. 5.

(*q*) This brief treatise of Picus, "De Ente et Uno," exhibits a chain of the most profound and abstract reasoning concerning the Deity, expressed in a language consistent with the sacredness of the subject, much more free from the terms and phraseology peculiar to the schoolmen than might be expected, and which (in comparison with the mode then usual, of treating arguments so metaphysical and abstruse) may be denominated luminous and classical. The same work afterwards gave occasion to a friendly controversy between Picus and Antonius Faventinus (who is otherwise termed Antonius Cittadinus). His "Objectiones" and the "Responsiones" of Picus may be found annexed to this treatise, *(inter Opera Pici.)* As a controversial writer Picus appears in a very amiable point of view. The following language with which he introduces his first reply to the objections of Faventinus bespeaks an ingenuousness, moderation and equability of temper which cannot be too much admired. "The pleasure which I experienced" (says he) "in perusing your animadversions upon my lately published work, was equal to the charity and honest freedom with which they were composed. Greatly am I indebted to you for a kind office which were we more ready to render our friends, or more willing to solicit from them, we should assuredly become both wiser and better. But a fatal notion too often possesses the minds of men, that those are inimical to our persons who disapprove our errors: that freedom of animadversion betokens dislike or moroseness; compliments and flattery, affection and good temper. Hence it happens, that whilst we prefer undeserved praise to deserved reproof, we always incur ridicule, but never merit commendation. Behold the extent of our error. Praise of every kind is generally unprofitable, often hurtful; for if just, what advantage arises from it? but if false and unmerited, it intoxicates with foolish vanity the person who is the object of it, and exposes

Picus had now probably ceased to be a constant resident in the monastery at Fiesole, and consented to mingle occasionally in more public scenes; but neither the gaiety of Florence, the classical magnificence and elegant hospitality of Lorenzo's palace, nor the less restrained opportunities of society and converse with the learned who were resident in, or occasionally visited that city, could efface his partiality for his favourite seclusion, whither he frequently retired to indulge his meditations, or converse with the religious of the convent and their venerable and friendly superiour Matteo Bosso. That worthy abbot had now completed a work in which Politian and Picus had taken a friendly interest; and its publication, which took place in the year 1491, gave rise to two pleasing epistles, the one of which was addressed by Matteo himself

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those who bestow it to derision. But reprehension is always beneficial: if just, it instructs: if the contrary, it excites us to the defence of truth. In a word, what else is it to be the object of reproof, than to be rendered better by the labour of another? What else to have your work polished by a friendly file, than to profit, in your own leisure, by his vigils and studies?"

Faventinus was well versed in the writings of the schoolmen; but far from possessing erudition equal to that of Picus, he appears to have been unacquainted with the Greek language. "Nec possum non mirari te," (says Picus) "*etiam si Platonica non legeris, in Thomæ tamen lectione frequentem,* huic adeò insistere argumentationi, Deus est, ergo est ens, cum ipse Thomas ad verbum dicat, non se hæc mutuò consequi esse et esse ens, sed ad diversas omnino quæstiones neque cognatas invicem pertinere. Quanquam quid opus hìc Thomæ authoritate? Quis dubitat nisi insipiens an sit Deus? quis rursus nisi insipiens præsumit scire etiam aliqua ex parte vel minima quid sit Deus. Cum igitur diversissima sint, scire an sit Deus, et scire quid sit Deus, diversissima

to Roberto Salviati, (*r*) the other, by Politian to his patron Lorenzo, which besides that it is less generally known than the rest of his let-

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etiam erit oratio, qua dicitur Deus est, ab eâ qua dicitur Deus est ens: cum illa etiam Deum esse quo nihil est certius asseveret, hæc verò quid sit Deus aliqua ex parte, quo nihil incertius audeat pronunciare. Quapropter rectissimè tibi quærenti inter disputandum quid esset Deus? respondit vir doctissimus POLITIANUS noster ex Simonidis poetæ sententiâ, se nescire quid esset." *(Vide Pici Respons. &c. Oper. p.* 177.*)*

(*r*) MATTEUS BOSSUS, CANONICUS REGULARIS, to ROBERTUS SALVIATUS.

By that respect and those kind offices which you constantly extend to me, as well as to all who possess your good opinion, I acknowledge myself honoured and obliged. Such works of mine as you have perused, you have more than approved, lavishing upon them expressions of praise far beyond their real merits. With frequent and friendly instances you have urged me to publish my "Salutaria Gaudia." Joannes Mirandula and our esteemed Politian have expressed a wish to the same purport; one of whom we contemplate with astonishment, as the luminary of the present age,—while the other, in his character of an highly eminent and skilful professor of polite letters, is confessedly the pride and ornament of Etruria. The work at length issues from the press, which, as it were at a single birth, has brought to light more than six hundred copies. Permit me to present you with one of them for your occasional use. The perusal of it (if you may yet be supposed to need such a monitor) will, I trust, lead you to contemn the empty and delusive gratifications of earth and sense. It will tend to exalt your aims to the pursuit of true felicity, to guide you, my beloved friend, in the direct path that leads to blessings of incalculable value, and to joys of eternal duration. You see our book waits upon you without any kind of superadded ornament and in the plain and simple guise in which it issued from the press. To you, who are at once rich and liberal, we leave the care of binding, and embellishing it with vermillion. *Adieu."* *(Inter Polit. Ep. Lib.* vii. *ep.* 9.*)*

ters, deserves to be here introduced, not only as applicable to our present subject, but also as one of the happiest essays of that scholar in a species of composition wherein he possessed a felicity beyond most others of his age.

Angelus Politianus, to Laurentius Medices. (*s*)

"Prudently on this, as on all other occasions you act, Lorenzo! in chusing to pass the concluding days of the Lent season at your villa Agnana, rather than at Florence. What port could afford you a more secure asylum from the restless sea of your important occupations during this solemn contest of nature and grace, than that delightfully embosomed recess of the Tuscan shore. I also, a fugitive from the city, and our beloved Picus of Mirandula are constantly at Fiesole. We have been assiduous in our visits to the abbey founded by your pious ancestor Cosmo, the superiour of which, Matteo Bosso of Verona, a person of great sanctity of morals and an unblemished life as well as the highest attainments in polite letters, has so charmed us by his elegant manners and the allurements of

(*s*) This letter does not occur in any edition of the works of Politian. It is given in the "Itinerarium" of Mabillon and Germain as a literary *morceau* little known: "Quia rarissima est, hoc loco exhibere quoddam operæ pretium videtur. Hæc Politiani epistola præfixa est libro Matthæi Bossi "De Veris Et Salutaribus Animi Gaudiis" *editionis* M.CCCCXCI. nec alibi (quod quidem sciamus) recusa." From that rare work however, Mr. Roscoe has given the original in his "Appendix to the Life of Lorenzo de' Medici: Vol. iii. No. LXVIII.

his conversation, that Picus and myself as often as we took our leave of him, contrary to what we ever experienced before, found ourselves enveloped in a kind of solitude, and no longer equal to our mutual entertainment. The worthy abbot, as if aware of this, presented us with a dialogue of his composing, "De Salutaribus Animi Gaudiis," by way of substitute for his own society: and so much were we taken with the matter and style, that as long as we read, we actually ceased to feel the want of the author's presence. This production, Lorenzo! I now transmit to you for your perusal while you recline beneath your shade of pines, at the head of the fountain. You will, I think, be delighted with the subject, the thoughts, strain, polish, variety and richness of a work, in which the praises of your own illustrious house are not omitted; and if it be honoured with the addition of your suffrage, the copies are speedily to be multiplied through the medium of the press. *Adieu.*"

In the month of June, 1491, Picus accompanied Politian in an excursion to Venice. It was probably on this occasion that the latter paid his earliest visit to the celebrated Cassandra Fidelis, and he has left in a letter to Lorenzo de' Medici, some account of the impressions made upon him by the first view of this learned lady. Concerning the transactions of Picus at Venice, what little remains upon record may be found in the letter of Politian above-mentioned.

Vide Roscoe's Life of Lorenzo de' Medici. Append. LI.

Envy, which is wont to attend upon conspicuous merit and talents in every station of life, as the shadow upon the substance, is

often more than ordinarily excited by a superiority in literary attainments. From the occasional assaults of this unworthy passion, Politian and his friend Picus were not exempted. The reader is probably no stranger to those reflections which were cast by various individuals upon the style of the former, and the *portenta verborum* which he was charged with affecting. Of this topic Lucius Phosphorus making incidental mention, ridicules the enemies of the Florentine scholar, who being compelled to acknowledge his accuracy of research, unwearied industry and unquestionable erudition, wished to deny him the merit of classical diction. The same ridiculous critics of the age found themselves offended, as Phosphorus remarks, with the unbounded encomiums which Politian constantly bestowed on his friend Picus, alledging (to evince their wit on the occasion) "illud Æsopæum, nihil reliqui aliis esse." Of these malevolent detractors Politian declares himself perfectly regardless: well satisfied that his own style and diction will bear the test of classical authority. "To eloquence," he justly observes, "it is not essential that it should be of one unvaried character "eloquentiæ non vultus non color unus:" "and who," says he, "has ever yet been pronounced eloquent by the suffrages of every judge?—whether it be that each is best pleased with his own manner, or that what commends itself to one has no charms for another. Compared with Cicero, some pronounce Demosthenes dry and unadorned. The orations of Demades are charged with smelling of the lamp. Æschines, in the judgment of some forsooth, is barbarous and

Polit. Ep. Lib. iii. ep. 14.

uncouth. Others, in their decisions respecting him have been as contradictory as various: which," says he, "I notice, not because I am so vain as to compare myself with the orators of antiquity, but that you may be induced to restrain your resentment in the present case. As to the reflections cast upon my encomiums of Picus, they are perfectly consistent with the nature of envy: but provided his life be prolonged, and he continue as he has begun, envy herself shall be compelled to own that I have not commended him above, but infinitely below his real deserts."

Hitherto, since his retreat to Florence, Picus seems to have found such a degree of satisfaction in the society and conveniencies of study which that city and its neighbourhood afforded him, as effectually precluded every desire of changing the scene. The spring however of the year 1492, was signalized by an event which was equally afflicting and unexpected; and which proved in a great measure fatal to the future prospects of these learned friends, and to the reviving interests of literature in general. This was the death of their illustrious patron and associate Lorenzo de' Medici, who was carried off by a fever in the prime of life, and in the midst of his honourable and useful career. This affecting incident occasioned a general consternation, not only amongst the scholars and citizens of Florence, but the friends of learning and social order in all the states of Italy. The tidings of Lorenzo's decease quickly spread to distant parts, with all that variation and dubiety of circumstances which commonly attend hasty rumours. Jacobus Antiquari-

us(*t*) secretary to the Duke of Milan, then on public business at Pavia, immediately addressed

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(*t*) Jacobus Antiquarius was a native of Perugia. His parents are represented to have been persons of exalted rank. He was a scholar of Joannes Antonius Campanus; and in what estimation the memory of that professor was held by the grateful pupil, appears from his letter to Michael Fernus, prefixed to the edition of the works of Campanus, published *Romæ*, 1495. To the solicitude of Antiquarius literature is indebted for this first and perhaps only entire edition "*Operum Campani.*" Michael Fernus, a Milanese scholar, at his pressing instance undertook the superintendance of the press on this occasion, and enriched the publication with a copious life of Campanus and a variety of elaborate prefaces addressed to various persons, and occurring in different parts of the volume. That which bears the following superscription "Michael Fernus Jac. Antiquario Ducali Secretario S." abounds with testimonies highly honourable to the literary reputation of Antiquarius.

On quitting his native city, Antiquarius obtained a political office of consequence and responsibility at Bologna. About the year 1460 he removed to Milan; where his erudition and merit enabled him to secure the favour and patronage of the princes of that state. Under the auspices of Giovanni-Galeozzo, and Ludovico-Maria Visconti, dukes of Milan, he long held the important office of secretary and prime minister. Thus exalted to a rank of great eminence and extensive influence, he liberally and munificently exerted himself in the encouragement of useful and ornamental letters, of which he was recognised in his sphere as a distinguished patron.

Amongst other works inscribed to Antiquarius, were "C. Taciti Annales et Vita Agricolæ," by Franciscus Puteolanus of Parma, who exercised the profession of the *Belles Lettres* at Milan, at the time when he superintended this publication, but was afterwards induced to accept of the orator's chair at Bologna. *(Vide Saxium in Hist. Typogr. Literar. Mediolanens. ad an.* 1479.*)* The same editor inscribed to Antiquarius his edition of "Plinii Panegyricus et Alia," published, as it is supposed, A. D. 1482, at the instance of Antiquarius, "in gratiam Joannis Galeatii Sfortiæ," the young prince of Milan. *(Vide Saxium ut supr. p.* 237.*)* The prefaces to both these publications equally abound with the praises of Antiquarius, and incidentally furnish

a letter to Politian requesting more circumstantial information on this subject. "I have Polit. Ep. Lib. iv. ep. 1.

many pleasing notices of his history; of his great munificence, erudition, hospitality, and especially of the purity, integrity and disinterestedness of his private character. With Aldus Manutius, Antiquarius also maintained a friendly intercourse. To him Aldus inscribed his edition of "Plutarchi Opuscula," *Gr.* published *Venetiis*, 1509, *in folio*. The prefatory address written by Aldus thus terminates: "Libuit hic subjungere Hendecasyllabos quos, cum veni ad te Mediolanum lusisti extempore præ summo gaudio adventûs nostri, ut faciant et hi fidem mutui amoris nostri:

> Aldus venit en! Aldus ecce venit!
> Nostrum sinciput, occiputque nostrum,
> Mel, sal, lac quoque, corculumque solus,
> Graios altera, et altera Latinos
> Qui apprendendo manu, reduxit omneis
> In verum modo limitem, superbos
> Victores superans Olympiorum.
> Nunc O! nunc Juvenes ubique in urbe
> Flores spargite. Vere namque primo
> Aldus venit en! Aldus ecce venit!

Antiquarius seems to have enrolled his name amongst those of the members of the "Academia Romana." Amongst other matter annexed to the edition of the works of Campanus, by Michael Fernus above-mentioned, is the amusing epistle addressed to Pomponius Lætus, with the following superscription:

Dictatori Perpetuo Imperatori Nostro Maximo Pomponio Læto, Magistro Equitum Phædro, cunctoque Reipublicæ Literariæ, Michael Fernus Mediolamnius, Vilis Pabulator, strenuam pugnam pulchramque victoriam."

In this whimsical address the same character is preserved throughout. Merula and Politian are denominated Proconsuls: "Proconsules illi quorum virtute res nostra in Cisalpinis et totâ Hetruriâ tuta esse potuit, acerrimè præliando Merula, Politianusque oppetière. Profluit jam latèque securus in nos diffunditur hostis." After some other curious matter, "Expergiscere Imperator Maxime, indue arma, advola, vigila, suda pro communi gloriâ, pro imperii Latini splendore, sanguinem illum, illum inquam, sanguinem atra-

this moment been informed" (says he) "that at the second watch of the last night a flying courier passed through this place on his way to the duke, bringing news of the death of Lorenzo de' Medici. Struck with astonishment at such information, with my eyes rivetted on the earth, is heaven then, I exclaimed, so much incensed against us, as by taking away this most excellent man to bereave us at once of so many fair prospects, so brilliant an image and exemplar of every virtue! But on the calamities of Italy I forbear at present to expatiate: for misfortunes which emanate from the loss of characters so elevated, are like those snows, which melting upon the summits of the mountains, are wont

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mentarium, effunde. Dissipa hostes, urge, cæde, propelle, &c." At length the author addresses his "Commilitones:" —"Tu, Magister equitum Phœdre, quis sis nunc ostende, &c. . . . Primum cornu occupa Hyppolite, &c. Ah Pontane! per illa myrthetis consita litora rem nostram fortiter in câ felicissimâ Ausoniæ orâ a Barbaris et foedo contactu tueare. . . . . Felsinea tu qui tibi mœnia propria defendenda suscepisti, Beroalde, quem occupâsti locum viriliter in præcelsâ studiorum matre Bononiâ tueare. Tibi, tibi credita Æmilia, &c." Ubertinus, Mancinellus, Sulpicius, Antonius, &c. all successively obtain a share in this exhortation; after which it follows: "Sufficimus nos urbi. Si evigilet Imperator, nihil potest respublica nostra capere detrimenti. Vos vestras incolumes præstate provincias. Insubrii, Tusci, quanquam destituti videantur maximis Imperatoribus, paucorum tamen patriciorum uniusque Antiquarii curâ et labore in officio perstant, &c."

Antiquarius died at Milan, *anno* 1512. "Eversis jam, immo penè deletis Mediolanensium Principum fortunis." *(Vide Elogium Antiquarii ap. Saxium ut supra. Baillet in Diss. de Pomp. Læto: "Jugemens," &c. Vol.* i. *p.* 127; *and the collection, entitled "Præfationes et Epistolæ Volumini-bus editis appositæ ab incunabulis Typographiæ ante* 1500, *in* 4to." *Also Epist. Politiani passim.)*

to pour down in destructive torrents over all the plains." Politian, attentive to the request of his correspondent, enters very minutely in his reply into all the particulars of his honoured patron's illness and dissolution, and seems to have experienced a melancholy consolation in expatiating on his many shining qualities and virtues. He describes the last affecting interview between Picus and Lorenzo, which took place at the express desire of the latter; on which occasion the sincere and firm attachment of these illustrious friends was very forcibly and pathetically exhibited. Lorenzo evinced, upon this trying occasion, the same fortitude and magnanimity which he had displayed through life, and yielded to his fate with a pious resignation; regretting only his inability to complete those arrangements which he had so munificently made for the advancement of letters and the useful arts, and the furtherance of their common studies. Polit. Ep. Lib. iv. ep. 2.

Deprived of a Mæcenas by whose favour and patronage Politian, as he himself asserts, had confessedly been distinguished beyond every other professor of letters, and who had been the great spring and promoter of his labours, all his ardour for writing is, he declares, extinguished, and his former alacrity and enthusiasm for literary pursuits sunk into languor and inertness. He and Picus, of all the Florentine scholars, had possessed perhaps the very first place in Lorenzo's esteem. They were at least, amongst the most intimate of those friends in whose society he delighted to pass his hours of retirement and intermission from state affairs. "About two months before his decease, sitting" (says Politian) in

his chamber and conversing with us, as was his custom, on philosophical and literary subjects, he informed us that he had resolved to pass the remainder of his days with myself, Ficinus, and Picus of Mirandula, apart from the cares of government and the tumult of the city. He was a man" (thus the same scholar briefly, but emphatically, draws his character) "formed for every thing great, who alternately experiencing the propitious gales and the adverse storms of fortune, navigated the vessel of the republic with so much prudence that it were difficult to determine whether his moderation in prosperity or his firmness and patience in adversity were more conspicuous. Possessed of a versatile genius, a vigorous and perspicacious judgment, with respect to sciences, wherein others think it glorious singly to excel, he evinced himself equally eminent in all. Such were his probity, justice, and good faith, that these virtues seemed to have chosen the bosom of Lorenzo de' Medici as their favourite mansion and temple: his affability, politeness, and suavity of manners were attested by the extraordinary love and attachment not only of the commonalty but of all ranks. Amidst such an assemblage of great qualities, his liberality and magnificence shone with peculiar splendour, and exalting him, as it were to a station amongst the gods, crowned him with immortal glory. Far however from being performed with a view to fame, or from ostentatious motives, all his actions were the result of a real love of virtue. With what distinguishing affection, with what honours did he cherish men of letters of all descriptions! What earnestness and zeal did he

evince in enquiring after, and purchasing the works of Greek and Roman authors, in every part of the world! What immense sums did he devote to that object! Hence, not only the present age, but posterity also may be considered as having sustained an irreparable loss by his decease."

Lorenzo de' Medici having thus equalled in renown, and surpassed in lustre and usefulness of character, many of the most celebrated persons of antiquity, it is not surprizing that his loss was considered as a public calamity of the first magnitude. His death, like that of many of those who are most celebrated in history, is said to have been preceded by a variety of supernatural and portentous events declarative of this, and, as it was supposed, of yet further misfortunes that threatened the republic. These prodigies Politian himself, not exempt from the superstition that influenced the age, has detailed at length in his letter to Antiquarius: and we find them partially alluded to in the following poem which Petrus Crinitus his scholar addressed to Picus on the same mournful occasion.

PETRI CRINITI FLORENTINI IN OBITUM LAURENTII MEDICIS, AD JOANNEM PICUM MIRANDULAM.

Ecquis perpetuis constituet malis
Finem ullum, ut valeam reddere me mihi!
Pridem seposui dulciloquam chelym,
Et blandos Charitum modos.

Accedunt miseris funera luctibus,
Nec quicquam superos flectere victimis

Fas est, ut video: sic placitum Jovi,
Qui nutu regit omnia.

Heu! noster Medices, Italiæ decus,
O! Pice, interiit. Væ misero mihi!
Lugete Aonidum qui colitis sacra,
Et qui pro veteri fide

Virtutis pretium ritè reposcitis,
Nam quis tam rigido pectore barbarus,
Immanique animo, quin videat statim
Sublatum columen bonis!

Hic solus patriam consilio gravi
Undantem variis fluctibus extulit,
Nil diram veritus (discite posteri!)
Regum sævitiem et dolos.

Hic se pro pavidis civibus obtulit;
Hostilemque aciem robore pectoris
Perfringens, viridi tempora gramine
Cinxit; dum sibi non putat

Parcendum, ut Latio præsidium ferat.
Heu! heu! quam volucri decipimur bono!
Incassumque pii, ut qui nimio ambitu
Surdos distrahimus Deos.

At Tu mœsta novis, Patria! lacrymis
Indulge! nec enim cernere adhuc potes
Quantum mox miseris civibus imminet
Fatorum gravis exitus.

Disjecta horrisono marmora fulmine
Templorum, et nimiùm dira tonitrua
Non frustrà exitium terrificis minis
Portendunt patriis Deis.

O fallax utinam mentiar augur, et
Non vero auspicium carmine proferam!
Tu, Pice, interea desine conqueri,
Et parce imperio Jovis.

Quod si non alius mox aderit Deus,
Extinctum Italiæ qui reparet decus,
Et Phœbum cupiat sedibus Aönum
Transferre in Latios lares;

Consiste in veteri præsidio tamen
Virtutum, et quod habes auspiciis tuis
Jam partum, in tacito contineas sinu:
Felix sorte tuâ satis.

Nam mitto tot opes ingenii, et sacrum
Fœcundi genium pectoris, et simul
Præclaris animum dotibus arduum,
Quo certum statues gradum.

Sed me, sub tenerum tempus adhuc, velut
Surgentem viridi robore palmitem,
Cœli sævities invida perculit,
Dejecitque bonam indolem.

Sic decussa jacent brachia viribus
Allisis; neque posthac animo pari
Audebo ingenium tollere, nec licet
Sperare ulterius mihi.

What term awaits our country's woes!
When shall the afflicted bard respire!
Whose Muse long sleeps in drear repose,
Whose hand forgets to attune the lyre.

Wounds yet more deep excite the strain;
Fate's keenest shaft condemn'd to prove,
PICUS! our vows, our tears are vain
To avert the unpitying wrath of Jove.

Quench'd is the glory of our land,
LORENZO fallen! around his bier,
Ye Muses, call your faithful band,
And friendship, pour thy griefs sincere.

Whence now shall merit's ardent eye
Expect the wreath her brows to bind?
Fallen HE,—her proudest boast, her joy,
The column where her hopes reclin'd:

Alone who dauntless met the storm,
And steer'd our frail bark through the wave:
Generous the deep resolve to form,
The wrath, and guile of kings to brave.

With patriot zeal his bosom steel'd,
For us, he sought the hostile shore;
Dispers'd the foe, and from the field
The civic guerdon singly bore.

Who from himself to thee his care
Transferr'd, Etruria! low he lies:
Ah fleeting bliss! heaven mocks our prayer;
Or too much urg'd our suit denies.

Then, FLORENCE, pour the gushing tide,
And vent thy sorrows unrepress:
For woes that yet thy sons abide
Too justly throbs thy anxious breast.

Scath'd by Jove's bolt, the hallow'd fane
Thou saw'st with ponderous fall descend,

While direr thunders, not in vain
The God's unwonted ire portend.

Oh! may the event belie my strain,
And omens false this bosom move!
Nor THOU, my FRIEND BELOV'D! complain,
Nor rashly charge the pow'rs above.

If LATIUM's glories now must fade,
Destin'd her wreaths to bloom no more;
No other God from Pindus, lead
The tuneful Nine to Etruria's shore:

Stand THOU, endear'd to latest fame,
Revolving in thy conscious soul
Thy laurels past achiev'd,—thy claim
Beyond the reach of fate's controul.

But happier bards shall sing thy lore,
Thy gifts, by heaven profusely shed;
To wisdom's heights, that bid thee soar,
And firm thy foot her steeps to tread.

For me,—as in life's spring declines
Some sapling, by Jove's tempest riven;
My each young shoot of genius pines,
Nipt by the blighting frown of heaven.

Thus paralys'd her drooping plume,
No more my Muse attempts her flight;
Despair thy friend's perpetual doom,
And set his sun in hopeless night.

Bereft of his illustrious friend, Picus now resolved upon a temporary secession from Florence where every object reminded him of the loss he had sustained, and the general grief

and despondency could not fail to add to the poignancy of his own regret. So early in the year 1492 as the 15th of May, a letter which he addressed to his nephew proves that he had arrived at Ferrara. On this occasion he does not employ his pen in unavailing lamentations; nor even directly touch upon the late afflicting event. This letter is however of a more *sombre* cast than ordinary, and consists of religious reflections and admonitions at once consolatory and impressive. On the 19th of the same month, Picus makes an epistolary acknowledgment to Troilus Malvetius for his "Libellus de Sortibus:" a work which the author had probably inscribed to him, but the subsequent fate of which is uncertain. Soon after this time, we find him again deeply engaged in his oriental studies. He acquaints his nephew, that having obtained for a limited time the possession of certain Hebrew books, from a Sicilian Jew, who intended to quit Ferrara in the space of twenty days; he had almost blinded himself by his assiduous perusal of them; having scarce allowed himself, by day or night during a whole week, any respite from this employment. In the same letter he desires that his nephew will exert himself to the utmost in engaging one of the Italian princes to dispense with a visit, which he seems at that time to have expected or solicited from him; (*u*) alleging that he cannot

Pici oper. pag. 283.

Pici oper. pag. 244.

(*u*) Da operam quâ ratione potes ne meum istuc adventum BARRI PRINCEPS desideret: studia enim omnia interturbarem mea, quibus nôsti tu quam sim deditus, quanquam nihil præter ea curem. Haud satìs autem mihi constat, utrum mihi molestius, illi, an mihi displicere. Vale,

comply with his invitation without a total interruption of his beloved studies, the prosecution of which, is in his esteem, paramount to every other consideration.

The partiality which Picus, next to Florence, evinced for Ferrara as a place of residence, is attributed to several considerations. After Bologna, that city had been the earliest scene of his youthful studies. Its proximity to Mirandola might have some effect upon his choice: but this was principally influenced by the friendship which subsisted betwixt him and Ercole d' Este, the duke of Ferrara, with whose house his own was moreover connected by a species of affinity; his eldest brother, Galeotto, having married Biancha Maria d' Este, the sister of the duke. A short time previously to this period, Picus willing to exonerate himself from the weight of secular dignities and cares, had for a very inadequate consideration, transferred to his nephew, Giovan-Francesco, all his territories and other rights and possessions in Mirandula and Concordia, comprehending one third part of the patrimonial inheritance: and the Emperor Maximilian himself, whom these cities recognised as their superiour sovereign, had been induced to confirm the grant. The sums arising from this transfer, Picus employed partly in the purchase of lands, to secure an annual revenue for the due support of his household, and partly in charitable donations. (*x*) To the latter purpose the produce

Vit. a nepote ejus script. p. 100.

et Deum time, et te quotidiè cogita esse moriturum. *Ferrariæ*, 30. *Maii* 1492.

(*x*) " Quicquid autem ex hoc negotio pecuniarum acce-

of a great part of his rich furniture and plate was appropriated: although while all undue luxuries were banished from his table, a reasonable portion of the silver utensils and other valuable moveables was preserved, to keep up some appearance of his former rank and splendour.

Ibid.

While Picus, who now consecrated his whole attention to theological studies, thus manifested his indifference for secular riches and honours, his disinterestedness and consistency were also proved by his steady rejection of the highest ecclesiastical dignities and emoluments. By the pressing and repeated offers of such allurements, two monarchs, whom his biographer forbears to name, vainly attempted to induce him to assume the clerical character. Another, desirous of attracting such an ornament to his court, by the offer of the most honourable and lucrative state employments, was answered, that wealth and dignities were not the objects of his desire; and that he had willingly sacrificed those things to religious considerations and the

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perat, partim pauperibus elargitus est, partim in emendis agris unde et ipse et ejus familiares alerentur, exposuit: nominatimque CORBULAS in agro Ferrariensi multis aureorum millibus nummûm sibi comparaverat. *(Vit. ut supra.)* Not content with performing acts of munificence and charity the necessity and propriety of which suggested themselves to his own personal observation, Picus engaged his friend Hieronymus Benivenius to be constantly in search of such cases of indigence and distress amongst the poorer citizens of Florence as might happen to escape general observation: authorizing him to supply immediate relief as necessity required, and engaging to refund from his own purse whatever sums he should disburse on these benevolent occasions. *(Vit. ut supra.)*

uninterrupted liberty of prosecuting his studies. (*y*)

A few characteristic anecdotes of Picus occur in the account of his life composed by his nephew, to which we have had occasion so frequently to refer. This performance of Giovan-Francesco was several centuries ago translated into English, with some amplifications, by Sir Thomas More: and the reader will not be averse to the perusal of an extract or two from the antiquated and now almost forgotten work of our learned countryman. Concerning the "Liberalitie" of Picus and his "contempt of richesse," Sir Thomas thus expresses himself: "Liberalitee only in him passed measure: for so farre was he from the gevyng of any diligence to erthly thinges, that he semed somwhat besprent with the frekell of negligence. His frendes oftentimes admonished him, that he sholde not all utterly despise richesse, shewing him that it was his dishonestie and rebuke, when it was reported (were it trew or false) that his negligence, and setting nought by money, gave his servauntes occasion of disceit and robberie. Ne-

Sir Thomas More's Works Lond. 1557, in fol. p. 7.

(*y*) Still solicitous for his advancement, his friends at Ferrara strove to overcome the scruples of Picus by the intermediation of Pandulphus Collenutius of Pesaro, an eminent civilian, whom they engaged to exert all his eloquence to persuade him to aspire to the dignity of cardinal; or at least not to reject such an honour if spontaneously offered by the supreme pontiff. Collenutius, who was upon terms of intimate friendship with Picus and acquainted with his sentiments on these subjects, after some hesitation frankly avowing his commission, and naming those at whose instance he had undertaken it, "Return them," said Picus, "in my name, this answer, *non sunt cogitationes meæ cogitationes vestræ.*" *(Vit. ut supra.)*

verthelesse, that mynde of his (which evermore on high cleved fast in contemplacion, and in thenserching of natures counseill) coulde never let down it selfe to the consideracion and overseyng of these base, abjecte, and vile erthly trifles. His high stewarde came on a time to him, and desired him to resceive his accompt of suche money as he had in many yeres resceyved of his: and brought forth his bokes of rekening. Picus answered him in this wise: My frende (saith he) I know wel ye have mought oftentimes, and yet maie desceyve me and ye list: wherfore the examinacion of these expenses shal not neede. Ther is no more to doo, if I be ought in your dette, I shall paie you by and by. If ye be in myne, paye me, either now, if ye have it: or hereafter, if ye be nowe not able."

Ibid. pag. 4. "Before this" (says the narrative of Sir Thomas, alluding to his disappointment at Rome and the consequent "chaunge of his life") "he had been both desyrous of glorie and kindled in vaine love, and holden in voluptuouse use of women. The comelynes of his body, with the lovely favoure of his visage, and therwithall his mervelouse fame, his excellent lerning, great richesse and noble kyndred, set many women a fier on him. From the desire of whom he (z) not abhorring (the waie of life set a side) was somwhat fallen in to wantonnesse. But after that he was once with this variaunce wakened: he drew backe his mynd flowing in riot, and turned it to Christ. Wo-

(z) "The best of us all hathe had a maddyng tyme." *(Marginal note of Sir Thomas More.)*

mens blandimentes he chaunged in to the desire of heavenly joyes, and dispising that blast of vaine glorie, which he before desired, now with all his mind he began to seke the glorie and profite of Christes churche, and so began he to ordre his condicions, that from thenceforth he might have ben approved: and though his enemye were his judge."

"Wedding and worldly busines, he fled almost alike. Notwithstandynge, whan he was axed once in sport, whether of those two burdeyns semed lighter, and which he wold chose, if he should of necessitie be driven to that one, and at his election: whiche he sticked thereat a while, but at the last he shoke his heade, and a litle smilyng he answered, that he had lever take him to mariage, as that thing in which was lesse servitude, and not so much jeopardie. Libertie above all thing he loved, to which both his owne naturall affeccion, and the studie of philosophie enclined him: and for that was he alwaie wandering and flitting, and wolde never take him selfe to any certeyne dwelling."(*a*) Ibid. pag. 8.

(*a*) This life of Picus by Sir Thomas More, is inscribed as a new year's gift, "Unto his right entierly beloved sister in Christ, Joyence Leigh." Three of the letters of Picus occur in this work. One of these addressed to Andreas Corneas, "a worshipfull man and an especiall frende of Picus," and which is the same with that cited page 220 of this volume, is said to have been "writen at Paris, the xv. daie of October, the yere of grace MCCCCLXXXII." In the edition of the letters of Picus printed at Basil, 1601, it is dated *Perusiæ*, 15 *Oct.* 1486, and the error in this instance is probably on the side of Sir Thomas. After the three letters, is translated Pico's interpretation of this psalm. "*Conserva me Domine.*" Then follow I. "Twelve Rules of John Picus Earle of Mirandula, partely ecciting, partely

From the narrative of Giovan-Francesco who dwells at much length on the private as well as public virtues of his uncle, we infer,

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directing a man in spiritual bataile." These are diffusely paraphrased in English verse. II. " The twelve weapons of spirituall battayle, which every manne shoulde have at hand when the pleasure of a sinnefull temptacion commeth to his minde. These are described in verse also. III. " The twelve properties or condicions of a lover;" and the reader from the following specimen will perceive that the verses of Sir Thomas More form an ample commentary, where his original has merely furnished a brief, sententious text.

In the language of Picus these properties are thus described:

1. " To love one alone, and contempne al other for that one.

2. " To thinke him unhappy, that is not with his love.

3. " To adourne himself for the pleasure of his love.

4. To suffer all thyng, though it were death, to be with his love. &c.

Sir Thomas:

" The twelve propertees we have at length more openly expressed in Balade, as it foloweth.

" The first point is to love but one alone,
And for that one all other to forsake,
For whoso loveth many, loveth none.
The floode that is in many channels take,
In eche of them shall feble streames make,
The love that is devided among many,
Unneth suffiseth that every part have any.

So thou that hast thy love sette unto God,
In thy remembraunce this emprint and grave,
As he in soveraine dignitie is odde,
So will he in love no parting felowes have:
Love him therfore with all that he thee gave,
For body, soule, witte, cunnyng, minde and thought
Parte will he none, but either all or nought."

In like manner the other eleven properties are paraphrased, all in " Balade" of the same metre. Lastly occurs " A praier of Picus Mirandula unto God," translated into twelve stanzas of seven lines each, from the original Latin which

that the mind of Picus was powerfully influenced by his religious principles, and the ameliorating and perfecting efficacy of christian morality, strongly exemplified in his life and character. In him pride, ambition, anger, resentment, and those other turbulent passions which tyrannize over every bosom where they possess the ascendancy, were wholly, or if allowance is to be made for the partiality of friendship, at least in a great measure subdued: and we are told, that in the latter part of his life neither his high birth, his affluence, the consciousness of his own extraordinary powers and attainments, nor the unbounded admiration and applause which they excited, could ever produce in him any symptoms of vanity or self-conceit, — no events whether prosperous or adverse discompose the constant and uniform serenity of his mind. These great qualities however, were not wholly unmixed with some portion of the superstition incident to the age. Picus is represented, as having at particular seasons, added to the usual mortifications prescribed by the church by voluntary penances and self-inflicted pains, which the erring judgment of those times considered as meritorious. Of many however of

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occurs in the collections of the works of Picus. The work bears the following title: "The Life of John Picus, Erle of Myrandula, a great Lorde of Italy, an excellent connyng man in all sciences, and vertuous of living: with divers epistles and other workes of the said John Picus, full of greate science, vertue, and wisedome: whose life and woorkes bene worthy and digne to be read, and often to be had in memory. Translated out of Latin into Englishe by Maister Thomas More." *(See the collection of his works before-mentioned, published in folio, A. D. 1557.)*

the abuses and corruptions of the papal hierarchy he appears to have been sensible, and on various points of doctrine his views have been pronounced much more rational than could be expected from the time.

Cellarii in Ep. Pici Mirand. Præfatio.

From the moral excellencies and virtues of Picus, we may pass on to notice his literary merits and services. Of his youthful studies some account has been given, and we have already witnessed the publication of several works which were the only parts of his literary labours that he survived to finish. When he had begun to turn his attention to sacred literature and the scriptures, he is said to have asserted with triumph that he had at length discovered not only true wisdom, but genuine eloquence; and he was wont to prefer the epistles of St. Paul in particular, to the most admired productions of all the orators of antiquity. His labours for the elucidation of the books of the Old Testament were intended as preparatory to similar exertions with respect to those of the New, which he purposed to illustrate by a diligent collation of the manuscripts and versions of them, in whatsoever languages then known to exist, and by commentaries which should exhibit his own original views and sentiments upon every part of the sacred volume, rather than a mere compilation of what had been already written. Relying upon his own skill in the Hebrew tongue, he undertook to vindicate the translation of St. Jerome against the calumnies of the Jews. He composed a treatise "De Verâ Temporis Supputatione." But his most elaborate undertaking was a work "Adversus Hostes Ecclesiæ," in which he proposed to refute,

I. "The avowed and open enemies of christianity: II. Atheists and those who reject every religious system, upon their own mode of reasoning: III. The Jews, from the books of the Old Testament and their own writers: IV. The followers of Mahomet from the Koran: V. Idolators and such as are addicted to any superstitious science, amongst whom, he particularly directed the artillery of his arguments against the partizans of judicial astrology: VI. Those who, perverting the doctrines of christianity, or denying due obedience to the church, are comprehended under the general name of heretics, whom he distinguished into no fewer than two hundred species, intending to make them so many distinct subjects of his animadversion: VII. Those christians who "hold the truth in unrighteousness" and discredit and contradict their profession by their practice." Of all these and other undertakings of his, so vast in project, scarce any now remain except his work "Contra Astrologiam Divinatricem," and a few "Opuscula." Picus, it appears, by the constant practice of hastily committing to paper the thoughts which occurred in rapid succession in a mind fruitful and teeming like his, and by the use of artificial characters invented for the purpose of brevity, as well as by frequent blots and interlineations, had so deformed and obscured his writing which in his youth had been remarkably fair and beautiful, that of the immense mass of manuscripts and confused papers found after his decease few could be decyphered or methodized. By great pains and labour his nephew however, was enabled to transcribe that portion of his voluminous

work which was levelled against judicial astrology, and which proved to be in a more finished state than the rest. It was afterwards published in various collections of his works under the title of "De Astrologiâ Disputationum Libri XII." and has entitled Picus to the praise of having been the first who boldly and sucessfully exposed the fallacy of this species of superstition. (*b*)

As in the matter, so also in the style of his compositions, Picus, disdaining servile imitation, was desirous of asserting his claim to the character of originality. His manner of writing, which professedly varies according

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(*b*) On the subject of Picus and his works Mr. Tenhove, in the translation of Sir R. Clayton, thus expresses himself. "He often repeated the maxim of S. Francis, that science is to be measured by works (Tantum scit homo quantum operatur *Vit. ejus a Nepote script.)* which, however ridiculous it might have been in the Calabrian peasant, fell with dignity from the first scholar of the age. His treatise "De Ente et Uno" is no longer read, and the world does not suffer by its slumbers; but the author and the work are not to be confounded. It was calculated for the age, and had its use; in ours it has ceased to be of any value. In the rest of his compositions, a little of the ancient rust may be sometimes visible, and if in his contempt for the vulgar errors of the times, he has retained a few of his own prejudices, he was at least the first who raised his voice against the follies of judicial astrology, to which all ranks of persons were then devoted, and which long continued to hold its empire over the human mind." *(Memoirs, &c. Vol.* i. *p.* 33.*)*

This work was published, probably for the first time, *Bononiæ, ap. Hector.* A. D. 1495, *in fol.* An edition of the works of Picus published in the ensuing year occurs with the following title: "Opera Joan. Pici Mirandulæ: *scilicet,* Heptaplus De Opere Sex Dierum, Apologia xiii. Quæstionum, Tractatus De Ente et Uno, Epistolæ plures, &c." *in Bononiâ, ap. Benedict. Hector.* 1496, *in fol. (Vide Dictionaire Bibliographique.)*

to the different subjects of which he proposed to treat, in his letters and works that have relation to general literature, is equally copious, classical and correct with that of almost any writer of his age. With the language of the schoolmen, or what in his day was termed the STYLUS PARISIENSIS, he was perfectly familiar, and could unravel all the metaphysical subtilties of those profound disputants with a facility peculiar to himself. Deeply versed in their writings from his early youth, he could discriminate their nicest shades of difference and accurately appreciate their comparative powers and talents; but above all, Aquinas was the author whom he was wont to mention with the greatest veneration, and him he distinguished by the epithet of "Splendor Theologiæ." In extemporaneous disputation his powers are said to have been prodigious, and he is described as having combined in his own method all those qualifications by which the schoolmen were individually distinguished and characterized. But for this exercise he had, long before his decease, formed a settled distaste; often observing, that being only calculated to display the skill of the mere logician, it was unworthy of the philosopher. Admitting however, that such discussions might be useful in the private circles of friendship, and when carried on for the sole investigation of truth, performed in public, he affirmed, they only served for a vain ostentation of learning and to attract the empty applause of the vulgar, who are ever incompetent to decide with justice; whilst on the part of the disputants themselves, the desire of triumphing over and confounding an

opponent generally superseded every beneficial and laudable purpose. With great reluctance, and at the repeated and urgent solicitation of Ercole, duke of Ferrara, in presence of a general synod of ecclesiastics assembled in that city, Picus however, once consented to enter the lists of public disputation, and acquitted himself with a skill, eloquence, and acuteness, which at once astonished and delighted his audience, and completely justified the high expectations which they had previously formed of his transcendent powers.

Amongst the early accomplishments of Picus, was a profound skill in music: in the theory, as well as practice of which he was a distinguished proficient. He had attentively studied such of the ancients as wrote concerning this art. Thus we find him, on a certain occasion desirous of borrowing for a few days from his friend Hermolaus, "Musicam Ptolemæi;" and his nephew asserts that at the time when he wrote, some of the musical compositions of Picus were extant, and that for their excellence and harmony, they were held by competent judges in the highest estimation. If we enquire in short, into those circumstances which thus extraordinarily conspired to the astonishing and multifarious attainments of Picus, in a life of so limited a duration, and which constituted him the universally acknowledged wonder of his age, the following among others are enumerated:—an incredible genius,—a most tenacious memory,—great wealth serving to facilitate the acquisition of books in every language and science, and in the purchase of which he expended more than seven thousand gold crowns,—

Pici oper. pag. 254.

constant and indefatigable application,—and a contempt of those honours and pursuits which monopolize the attention of the generality of mankind.

We must not however, omit to mention one claim of Picus to the praise of posterity, in which he stands almost isolated and single in his age; and this is, the ardour which he evinced and the exertions which he used for the restoration of oriental literature. "It is not unknown" (says a great authority of our own times) "that from the fourth to the fourteenth century, there were few in Europe who understood any of the oriental languages. Jerome in the fourth century was excellently skilled in them, and zealous in exhorting others to a similar proficiency: but from his time to the pontificate of Clement V. the Hebrew and Arabic tongues seem to have been no where cultivated with success. In the council holden at Vienna in 1312, it was decreed that schools for teaching the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Arabic languages should be erected in the universities of Bologna, Paris, Oxford, and Salamanca, and in some other places. Near two hundred years after the holding of this council, John Picus, Prince of Mirandula, and John Reuchlin, are reckoned amongst the first restorers of oriental literature in Italy and Germany, whence it is probable that the establishments of Clement had failed, in some degree, of the end proposed."(*c*)

(*c*) See "A Discourse delivered to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Ely, in May, 1780, by Dr. Watson, (now bishop of Landaff,) on the importance of the study of Ori-

The large sums expended by Picus in the acquisition of oriental books, and the diligence and eagerness with which he embraced every practicable means of extending his acquaintance with this species of erudition, have already appeared from the tenour of this work. A letter of Politian to Picus, not indeed preserved in the collection of that scholar's epistles, but cited by Lilius Gregorius Gyraldus, has a passage illustrative of the same propensity. "I had promised" (says Politian) "to pay you a visit this morning for the purpose of hearing the Indian stranger converse with you on the affairs of his native country, but a yet more tempting treat drew me another way: Pandulphus Collenutius having undertaken on occasion of our new chief magistrate's entering upon his office, publicly to recite a poem in praise of the city."(*d*)

In Dialog. de Poetis suorum temporum: tom. ii. p. 409. Ed. Basil. 1580, in fol.

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ental Literature:" printed in the "Asiatick Miscellany," Vol. i. p. 1. *Calcutta*, 1785.

The celebrated Joannes Reuchlinus or Capnio, the preceptor of Melancthon, and restorer of Hebrew Literature, *anno* 1487, visited Florence in his literary travels, and was hospitably received by Lorenzo de' Medici. He appears also to have formed a friendly connection with Politian and the other members of the Florentine academy. Thus Erasmus: *(Reuchlino Epistola inter Epp. Illustrium ad Reuchlin.)* "Et infelicitatem tuam deploras! qui felicissimo illo sæculo videris Italiam florente Agricola, Politiano, Hermolao, Pico, cui tam varia, tamque recondita contigerit eruditio, qui tot summatibus viris notus ac familiaris fueris, &c." *(Vide Hen. Maii Vitam J. Reuchlini Durlaci* 1687, 8vo. *et Ejusdem Vitam inter Adami vitas in fol.)*

(*d*) Promiseram venturum manè ad te ut INDUM illum HOSPITEM de rebus patriis unà tecum audirem fabulantem; sed unctior culina me rapuit. Pandulphus Collenutius, prætor Urbanus, carmen pro rostris, ineunte summo magistratu

After the decease of Lorenzo, Picus certainly became a less constant resident at Florence, but he still continued to visit that city at intervals, and to cultivate with unabating attachment his former friendships. At the latter end of the year 1492, we find him again at Florence; and a letter of this period shews that he once more cherished a design of visiting Rome, but whether he ever executed it does not at present appear. In fact, few documents present themselves to enable us henceforward to determine with due precision either the transactions of Picus, or the places which became the respective scenes of them. That however the midsummer of the year 1493 also found him in the society of his esteemed friends at Florence may be incidentally collected from the accounts transmitted to us of an event which was productive of renewed regret to him and to Politian: for then it was that they, and the friends of literature in general, experienced a further calamity in the decease of Hermolaus Barbarus.(e)

Nov. 27. Vide Pici oper. p. 235.

Vide Jovii Elog. H. Barbari.

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pronuntiavit. Materia Laudes Urbis. Sedi ego ad pedes dicentis in ipso suggestu, conspicuus omnibus. Omnes enim planè confluxerant qui sic ab ore dicentis pendebant, ut ad unum putares literatos. Carmen, grande, varium, cultum, nisi forsitan fefellit actio, certè potuit fallere, fuit enim planè Roscius. Mihi tantum tribuit, ut cum quid eminebat, oculos ad me statim quasi gaudens agnosci: sed exibit, puto, et claustra perfringet; etenim quâ formâ est, diù latebras ferre non potest." *Vale.*

(e) Hermolaus Barbarus, grandson of the celebrated Francesco Barbaro, and son of Zaccheria, was born A. D. 1454. His family both on the father's and the mother's side might boast of the highest nobility. Having scarce attained the first rudiments of education at Venice, he

From the historical records of those times we learn, that Ferdinand the catholic, having

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was placed at an early period of his youth under the instruction of the celebrated Matteo Bosso; then resident at Verona. Matteo gave testimony to the engaging temper and early progress of his pupil in a letter written long afterwards from Rome, and addressed to Picus, which is cited by Apostolo Zeno: and Antonio Brojanico, a Veronese poet of some celebrity, has done the same in a poetical address which commences with the words

> " Surge puer gravitate senex, virtutis avitæ
> Præclarum specimen, patris imago boni," &c.

So early as at the age of eight years he was placed by his father under the care of Pomponius Lætus at Rome, and continued to share in that professor's instructions for the space of ten years. At this city he commenced an intimacy with many of the most celebrated *literati* of the age; and in particular with Theodore Gaza, who formed the most honourable opinion of his talents. On his return to Venice, by his father's advice he took up his abode at Padua, with a view to finish his education in that university. Here he first applied himself to the version of " Themistii Paraphrasis, &c." which was finished in the ninteenth, but not published until the twenty-sixth year of his age. The next year, viz. anno 1474, he was nominated to pronounce the funeral eulogium of the Doge Niccolo Marcello, a composition which is at present extant. Retiring again to Padua he was authorized by a special faculty from the senate to read lectures on philosophy, and with great public approbation expounded Aristotle's Ethics, and drew up an epitome of them for the benefit of his hearers. Hermolaus spent five years uninterruptedly at this seat of learning, and having attained his twenty-third year was by the general approbation and concurrence created a doctor " si nella Filosofia che nelli Leggi civili e canoniche." At the age of twenty-five (viz. *anno* 1479) he returned to his native city, where he was speedily admitted to all those honours which were compatible with his rank and age. Yet persevering in his studies he this year interpreted " Aristotelis Rhetorica;" published his " Themistius" in the following; in 1482 translated " Discorides," and in 1484, " Dialecticen Aristotelis," not to mention a number of poems and other occasional productions.

achieved the conquest of Grenada, instituted a rigorous persecution against the *Marani*, by Anno 1491, Nov. 25.

In June, 1484, having again retired to Padua through fear of the plague then prevalent at Venice, he undertook, at the earnest solicitations of several of the students who shared his friendship, to expound some of the Grecian poets and orators, particularly Theocritus and Demosthenes. He had already borne two important offices in the republic, and was exalted to the dignity of senator *anno* 1484, *viz.* in the thirtieth year of his age.

In the same year Ermolao opened in his own house at Venice (che era alla Giudecia ove ora è il nobil palazzo Nani) a private school of philosophy, delivering his lectures at an early hour in the morning, which were thence termed "ἑωθινα i. e. *mattutine.*" His original intention was to admit as auditors only two or three of his friends, but scarcely was his undertaking divulged, when his house became a kind of college, and crowds assembled to hear him. Though this remarkable undertaking of Ermolao, was variously animadverted upon, some thinking it a proof of vanity, others a degradation of his rank, he persevered in it till June, 1485, but was then obliged to intermit his lectures, in order to acquit himself of an embassy from his republic to congratulate the Archduke Maximilian, who had recently been elected king of the Romans.

When Ermolao and his colleague had arrived at Bruges where the court then sat, upon the former as younger ambassador the task devolved of addressing Maximilian in a complimentary oration, which he accordingly performed on the third of August, 1486, to the great satisfaction of the monarch, who conferred upon Ermolao and his colleague the honour of knighthood. This oration which may be found *inter opera Politiani*, appears in print, at a greater length than it was really spoken, as Hermolaus had consented to abridge it for reasons explained in his letter to Giovanni Carondoleto, chief secretary of the king of the Romans. On his return to Venice, loaded with new honours, he was compelled to forego his favourite studies, for the public service. In 1488, the senate appointed him ambassador to Lodovico Sforza, duke of Milan, where his grandfather, and father had both formerly filled the like station. Here he arrived, as it is supposed, about the month of April in the beforementioned year: and here again his house, which was a noble and magnificent edifice, and such as was appropriate

whom the Italian writers understand those persons of the Jewish sect who having con-

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to his character, became the general resort of all the learned of Milan; and his ancient friend Merula consented to be his guest during his stay in that city: nor did his public occupations now prevent him from resuming his critical labours on the works of Aristotle and Dioscorides which had previously been intermitted. In one of his letters to Donatus, he observes, "Credo Dioscoridis et Aristotelis manes impetravisse mihi legationem ut aliquando absolvi possent." His embassy at Milan terminated in 1490, when he returned to his native city, and in about a year afterwards he was appointed "Ambasciadore ordinario" to the supreme pontiff Innocent VIII. where we have already seen his promotion to the patriarchate and its consequences.

His "Castigationes Plinianæ," "opera" (says Apostolo Zeno) "ripiena d' immensa e varia erudizione," was begun at Rome in the commencement of the year 1491. The first part of these he composed in about twenty months; and it was published *Romæ* 1492, viii. *Cal. Dec.* The second part, with those "super Pomponium Melam, in Plinium glossemata, &c." appeared, *Ibid.* 1493. Erasmus assigns to Hermolaus the most honourable place amongst those critics who have undertaken to illustrate Pliny the naturalist. His labours however have not wholly escaped censure. Le Pere Harduin (in the preface to his edition of the same author) accuses Hermolaus of rioting in an unjustifiable freedom of conjecture, overlooking or neglecting the authority of the most ancient MSS. misapprehension of Pliny's meaning, and consequently corrupting by his learned reveries many passages that were previously sincere. To these charges of Harduin, Apostolo Zeno shrewdly replies, that without entering into the full merits of the question, he shall content himself with observing, "I. That no critic has indulged more in the wildness of extravagant and unsupported conjecture than the good father himself. II. That the passages of Pliny's History corrected by H. Barbarus, in which Harduin silently acquiesces, are in far greater number than those which he ventures to censure and impugn."

Among other works of Hermolaus Barbarus edited and inedited as enumerated by Apostolo Zeno, mention is made of a manuscript collection of his "Epistolæ" in six books, written between June, 1484, and April, 1489; and then in possession of Il Signor Battista Nani, which he deems

sented to be initiated by baptism into the christian faith, had afterwards relapsed into their former errors. Many of these unhappy people flying into Italy, and more especially to Genoa, Pisa, and Naples, brought with them a pestilential disease of so malignant a

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highly worthy of publication, adding, that from the liberality of the noble posessor he flatters himself the republic of letters may hope to be speedily enriched with such an acquisition.

Hermolaus is said by Trithemius to have composed at least twelve thousand Latin verses. That he certainly put in his claim to the character of a poet, appears from passages in his own writings. Among the "Carmina Baptistæ Guarini" some lines occur addressed to Hermolaus, which confirm his early claim to the poetic wreath. But of all Ermolao's poetic effusions, only two short epigrams remain; one of these written in honour of Ridolfo Agricola of Groningen, a celebrated German scholar who died at Heidelberg, October 24, 1485, and preserved by P. Jovius in his "Elogia," is here subjoined.

Invida clauserunt hoc marmore fata Rodolphum
Agricolam, Frixi spemque decusque soli.
Scilicet hoc uno meruit Germania quicquid
Laudis habet Latium, Græcia quicquid habet.

Upon the first tidings of Hermolaus's indisposition, Picus and Politian are represented as manifesting their earnest solicitude for his recovery, by transmitting to him a medicine which was by the erring judgment of those times considered as a certain specific for this dreadful malady. *(Vide P. Jovii Elogia: ut supra.)* The remains of Hermolaus were conveyed with due funeral honours to Rome, and he was interred in the church "della Madonna del Popolo," where the following sepulchral lines were inscribed upon his tomb, which, though they occur not among the poems of Politian, are ascribed by Menckenius, (perhaps erroneously) to the pen of that scholar:

Barbariem Hermoleos Latio qui depulit omnem
Barbarus hìc situs est; utraque lingua gemit.
Urbs Venetûm vitam, mortem dedit inclyta Roma,
Non potuit nasci nobiliusve mori.

nature, that at Genoa where the greatest number of these refugees had settled, it is said to have carried off two thirds of the inhabitants. From Naples this scourge extended itself to Rome, and Hermolaus participating in the alarm which impelled many to seek for safety in flight, took refuge in a suburban villa of cardinal Oliviero Caraffa. His precautions were however ineffectual, and his asylum unhappily became the scene of his premature dissolution, which according to the most authentic accounts, happened in the month of July, A. D. 1493. It was a circumstance in some degree consolatory that the fruits of his learned vigils did not perish with him. All his domestics and intimate acquaintances having, in the general consternation, sought their own safety by a precipitate flight, the literary productions of this unfortunate scholar, as well as his property of every other description must have remained, to use the expression of Petrus Alcyonius, "tanquam bona caduca," at the mercy of every plunderer, had not Didimo Zenotele of Feltri, who had served Hermolaus in quality of scribe, and to whose erudition the latter has borne honourable testimony, with a very commendable zeal and prudence secured these precious remains, which were afterwards safely consigned to the nearest relatives of their author.

Castigationum Pliniano. Lib. vii.

Pet. Alcyonius de Exilio et Ap. Zeno Dissert. Vos. tom. ii. p. 398.

Picus and Politian lamented the loss of their literary associate as of a person in whose fate that of science itself was involved. "How sincerely," (says the latter, writing to the former) "Hermolaus was attached to me, as long as he lived, how reciprocally sincere the

Inter Polit. Ep. Lib. xii. ep. 1.

return of affection on my part, you can well attest, who yourself so highly esteemed and were esteemed by both;—insomuch, that as each of us might flatter himself with the idea of possessing the first place in your affection, so you might on your own part justly presume on occupying the first in that of both of us; and whilst this singular reciprosity of regard amongst us excited the delight of some and the envy of others, he who either commended or traduced any one of the three, was considered as praising or traducing all."

From the period under our present consideration to the spring of the year 1494, Picus again in a great measure eludes our researches. A letter however, addressed to him by Politian is extant, (written in the month of May) which after a very honourable eulogy on the memory of their deceased friend, turns upon some points of criticism concerning which Hermolaus in his "Castigationes Plinianæ" appeared modestly to have differed from Politian. The latter thought himself bound to vindicate his own sentiments, as far as they stood committed in his writings, or were known from his public conversation: since silence on his part might possibly be understood as an acknowledgement of error. This therefore he does by an appeal to Picus; considering him as a most able and competent arbitrator "qui inter amicos disceptantes litem dirimeret." To no very distant time from this may be probably referred another epistle of Politian to Picus, which presents itself without a date. On this occasion Politian commences by saying, that when he was, upon a former occasion, expounding to the academic students of

Polit. Ep. Lib. xii. ep. 2.

Florence his own "Rusticus;" having arrived at that part of the poem where, in imitation of Hesiod, he had assigned certain days of the month for the performance or superintendance of particular rural labours, a question arose in his own mind, how far such a distinction of days had its foundation in reason and nature; and how far these observances ought to be ranked amongst the superstitious reveries of vulgar credulity. "You, Picus," (adds he) "being at present engaged in a work "Adversus Astrologos," so replete with sound argument and erudition, are the fittest person to resolve me what degree of deference is to be paid to these precepts of the old Grecian bard; which by imitating I have made my own." Afterwards recapitulating Hesiod's "Dierum Partitiones," and offering his own observations upon them, Politian confesses himself dissatisfied with his own judgment, and renews his request that Picus will consider the subject, and either throw his learned conjectures into the form of a letter, or suffer them to constitute a topic for their mutual amusement in their next walk; for in such discussions, it appears, they were wont to pass the time appropriated to this salubrious exercise. Politian probably wrote this letter from the city; whilst Picus intent upon the work before-mentioned, pertinaciously confined himself to the solitude of his rural retreat. To this employment of his friend Politian reverting, thus concludes his epistle: "Herewith I transmit to you the following Greek epigram which I lately dictated under the influence of wrath against these "Astrologers" of yours, who detain you in the act of wrangling about

their pretensions, and confined within the limits of your country villa so much longer than I could wish.

ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΙΚΟΝ ΜΙΡΑΝΔΟΥΛΕΑ.

ΚΑΙ τητ' αστρολογοις επιμεμφομαι ηερολεσχαις,
Οττι σοφης Πικη μοι φθονεησ' ωρης.
Και γαρ ο ενδυκεως τητων τον ληρον ελεγχων
Μεναζει εν αγρω δηρον εκας πολεως.
ΠΙΚΕ τι σοι και τουτοις; ου σ' επεοικεν αγυρταις
Ανταραι την σην ευτυχεα γραφιδα.

VAIN TRIBE avaunt! too long your air-spun dreams
Me of my PICO's converse lov'd beguile;
Whilst to refute your visionary schemes,
In solitude he spends the studious oil.
Bethink thee PICO! act the monk no more
To waste on JUGGLERS thy perverted lore.

For the aversion which Picus manifested to the science of astrology, several futile reasons have been assigned by writers, who ignorant of his true character, knew not that he was incapable of yielding to any other motives than his love of truth. Some pretend that the astrologers having adduced certain of his Theses published at Rome, in favour of their superstition, he thought himself obliged thus publicly to disavow the imputation. Varillas. Others allege that he had himself discovered by the science in question, that he was destined to die young; and took up his pen

Joan. Bapt. Gelli: fol. 139. des Discours Fantastiques. 1566.

against it out of pure resentment. Others, not aware of these motives, pretend that the astrologers, alarmed by his meditated attack upon them, and consulting together upon the most effectual means of repelling it, resolved upon calculating his nativity; and sent him the result by one of their order, Lucius Bellantius of Sienna: and subsequent events, it is added, justified their prediction. These contradictions sufficiently refute themselves. That Lucius Bellantius however, attempted to defend his favourite study by his pen against the assaults of Picus, is acknowledged; but it seems to be generally admitted that his success was such as might be expected from one who was inferiour both in the cause which he espoused, and in the learning which he brought to the contest. (*f*)

Petri Borelli Historiar. &c. Medico-physic; Cent. ii. p. 185.

(*f*) The DISPUTATIONUM IN ASTROLOGIAM Libri XII." of Picus, like many others of his works, appear to be the offspring of profound erudition and a correct judgment. They combine with a well ordered and perspicuous arrangement, an agreeable and popular style; and a felicity and soundness of reasoning, which render them on many accounts worthy the attention of the scholar of the present more enlightened period. It must indeed be owned, that his subject leading him to discuss many points of natural philosophy, he could only reason upon principles then received; many of which have however been since exploded. But here also his lights were as good as those of his opponents. He combated them upon their own *hypotheses*, and upon those which were sanctioned by the age. Whatever disadvantage arises to his arguments from more recent discoveries in the philosophy of nature, it affects those of his adversaries in an equal degree. Nay, if Picus could so successfully combat and overthrow this POPULAR DELUSION as he did, under such disadvantages, what would he not have effected, aided by the lights with which succeeding times have been blessed; lights which uniformly serve to confirm the wisdom and pro-

By the arguments of Picus and of his friend Politian against judicial astrology, even the superstitious prejudices of Marsilius Ficinus

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priety of his undertaking, and yet more clearly expose the vanity and folly of judicial astrology.

At page 302 *(Lib. ii. ch. ix. which is intitled "Raro evenire quæ dicunt Astrologi")* Picus thus expresses himself. "Et quid aliis egemus vel testimoniis, vel conjecturis, cum ipsa hoc nobis quotidie experientia testificetur: in re præsertim, in quâ (sicubi potest) maximè posse debet Astrologia præstare veritatem: aëris scilicet mutationibus prædicendis, pluvia, siccitate, æstu, frigore, ventis, grandine, terræ-motu; in quibus adeò falsi quotidie deprehenduntur, ut nullius ferè unquam diei status eorum prædictionibus respondeat. Observavi hyeme istâ, in suburbanâ meâ villâ, in quâ hæc scripsimus insignem omnem singulis diebus aëris mutationem, ipsis interim ante oculos positis decretis Astrologorum. Ita salubre mihi ubique faveat cœlum, ut in dierum supra centum atque triginta jugi observatione non plus sex aut septem tales vidi dies, quales in eorum libris futuros antè prævideram. Meminit puto adhuc Pandulfus Collennutius meus, juris quidem consultus, sed in omnibus literis ingeniosissime eruditus, quantum nobis Bononiæ risum super istâ re dederit quidam mathematicus, qui nos eâ die copiosissimos imbres jubebat expectare, quam totam lucidissimus sol et clarissimam et serenissimam reddidit."

But for the failure of predictions such as those abovementioned, Picus assigns a very sensible reason *(in Libro* iii. *cap.* xix. *p.* 339. *Cur Nautæ, Medici, Agricolæ, vera sæpius prædicunt quam Astrologi.)* "At falluntur aliquando, inquit Ptolemæus, qui Astrologica nesciunt! Quid quod Astrologi sæpiùs. Conficitur igitur ut Astrologi minùs Astrologica teneant quam qui Astrologi non sunt. Neque enim potest hoc denegari, magis ad fidem respondere quæ dicunt medici de ægris, agricolæ de annonâ, nautici de tempestatibus, pastores de pecoribus, quam quæ de iisdem rebus ab Astrologis prædicuntur. Ratio statim in promptu est, quandoquidem Astrologus signa respicit quæ non sunt signa, causas speculatur quæ non sunt causæ, propterea fallitur. Respicit enim coelestem dispositionem, quæ causa tantum universalis, non efficit varietatem inferiorum, nisi pro materiæ conditione causarumque efficientium inferiorum. Tamen nec coelestis illa dispositio quam respicit, sed ficta ab eo in coelo dispositio per vanissimas regulas et commentitias,

himself were apparently shaken: and we now find him addressing a letter to Politian which contains the semblance at least of a recantation of his former errors respecting stellar influence. He thus expresses himself in his usual style of inflation and allegory: "Against the numerous race of astrologers, who, like the giants of old, vainly and impiously conspire to deprive Jupiter himself of his own heaven, Picus the favorite of Minerva, and you the true Hercules of literature, frequently and successfully enter the lists of contention. Orpheus sings how the same Pallas frustrated the hostile aims of these monsters; many other bards, how by the exertions of Hercules, earth and existence were at once ridded of Antæus. What think you then of me? In reality, I who through life have been unanimous with you both, now as cordially conspire in your laudable undertaking." Ficinus next proceeds to explain, or rather to equivocate upon certain

Inter Polit. Ep. Lib. ix. ep. ult.

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non naturâ, sed arbitrio constans astrologorum: siquidem ut demonstrabimus, non hominum ille pater et deorum Deus, in coelo fecit imagines, signa, partes, dodecatemoria, domus, et hujusmodi alia quibus utuntur. Sed in coelo mentitus hæc est hominum deceptor et deorum infamator Astrologus: proptereaque nihil mirum si nullam rem futuram certâ ratione prænoscere ista ars potest."

An appropriate answer to the story that the astrologers revenged themselves upon Picus by calculating his nativity, may be found *Lib.* ii. *cap.* ix. *p.* 302, 3, where he relates the impositions which they practised, "super Pino Ordelapho Principe Foroliviensi, cui Lucretia (Pici) soror nupserat:' Also the case of "Petrus Attendalus juvenis ingeniosus, qui Heleonoram habuit uxorem, Galeotti fratris filiam." "Constantia" also, "Antonii fratris (Pici) uxor," appears to have died in direct contradiction to the predictions of those *charlatans*. *(Ibid. p.* 303.*)*

parts of his own writings that appear to favour the superstition in question, and then concludes in the same extravagant style in which we have seen him begin. The answer of Politian may be allowed to derive additional interest from its being apparently the latest of that scholar's epistolary compositions left upon record. Assuming a language which savours more of irony than seriousness, "I leave you," (says he) "my dear Ficinus, to imagine what pleasure and exultation I feel in perceiving you and my friend Picus so perfectly accordant that "non modò idem velitis in vitâ, sed et idem sentiatis:" in finding myself also no less dear to you both, than you are to each other; and in reflecting that it is our common desire to forward useful science, actuated by no selfish views, but by the pure pleasure which we feel in our exertions. Such is our constant occupation: whilst we so assign to each his respective province, that no department of study lingers under our hands. Picus is employed in illustrating the whole of the sacred scriptures, and combats "directâ fronte" against the adversaries of the church. Betwixt my favourite Aristotle and your own Plato he acts the part of a pacificator. You (not to mention your other versions of the ancients) are instructing Plato more especially, Plato and all those of his school, to express themselves in the Latin language, and illustrating them with ample commentaries. Upon me, (whilst in philosophy I am your *catechumen*) that variety of literary investigations has devolved, which if possessed of less dignity affords equal gratification. With regard to the astrologic tribe, concerning whom

Lib. x. ep. ult.

you have addressed to me so delightful a letter, I rejoice exceedingly to perceive that you either now begin to espouse the part of Picus or have long since espoused it: nor do I think it of any consequence whether you ever were of another opinion, or adopted in time past the principles of the opposite party. (*g*) To

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(*g*) To what an extent this very learned and profound platonist had on some occasions been the dupe of his own belief in judicial astrology may be collected from a singular letter of his to Lorenzo de Medici, warning the latter to be upon his guard against certain dangers, by which he is threatened from the then present aspect of the stars. "Hodie Laurenti, atque cras caveto tibi. Mars enim sub Capricorno tuo ascendente percurrens, quadrato aspectu hodie quidem Saturnum, cras vero solem videtur aspicere. Præterea Saturnus ipse ascendentis tui dominus nondum solis radios priores evasit, &c." He adds, that he had waited on him some days before, with a design of giving him earlier notice of this impending danger; but on reflection, thought it best to defer the intelligence to the last moment, in order to shorten the period of his sufferings from the apprehension which it must unavoidably occasion. *(Epistolar. Ficini Lib.* vi. *p.* 803.*)*

It appears from a letter of his to Picus, that he occasionally suffered in no small degree, from his own personal apprehensions on the like account. The angry appearance of the heavenly bodies had deterred him from paying his usual visits to Picus. We discover, that in the struggle betwixt fear and inclination he had actually twice set out, and turned back as often; not being able to collect courage enough to pursue his walk. "Quod mense superiore tardior admodum quam soleam ad te accesserim in causâ sit Saturnus mense etiam superiore retrogradus, postquam ipse ex Capricorno solem in Tauro per Triangulum coepit aspicere. Quod autem heri, bis ad te, et manè et vesperè proficiscens, bis retuli pedem, si qua apud superos culpa est, in culpa sit Jupiter,—heri namque incoepit Jupiter retrogradarius esse, &c." *(Ficini Ep. Jo. Pico Mirandulano, Lib.* viii.*)* Picus in his answer, by a delicate and ingenious play upon words, rallies the astrologer while he compliments the man. (See his letter, *inter Ep. Ficini Lib.* viii. *Operum tom* i.)

change his sentiments is no disgrace to a philosopher who makes daily advances in wisdom, and often sees it expedient to accommodate himself to the prejudices of the vulgar, as Aristotle and Plato in some of their writings have done. . . . . In selecting me to be the special depositary of your sentiments, you have conferred upon me a distinguished obligation. That you should persist however, in complimenting me with the appellation of Hercules, I cannot altogether approve. For my own part I consider you as in jest, but am apprehensive lest you should thus afford a pretext to the malevolent and envious for cabal and derision. By such no man of real worth and erudition has ever been spared; and when you, either wholly led astray by the partiality of friendship (which I must think to be the case) or deluded by that kind of slight resemblance which sometimes prompts us to compare small things with great, confer upon me this epithet, the envious party will I fear, term it adulation, and accuse me as though I felt a degree of self-complacency in such a name. In my estimation however, the assurance of your regard is of far more weight than whatsoever all such may either think or say; and at once supported and fortified by my own conscious rectitude and your authority, I hold in contempt their groundless and ridiculous surmises. But upon these topics we can enter more particularly when we meet. As your own villa at Careggi must be disagreeable from the heat at this season of the year, condescend to pay a visit to our rural abode at Fiesole. Here we have abundance of water, while from the lowness of its scite we

Arist. in Exotericis libris. Plato in Dialogis.

are sheltered from the sun, and always enjoy a refreshing breeze. Retired as is the villa itself, it commands the whole city. Notwithstanding the populousness of the neighbourhood, I live here in that solitude which is always grateful to those whose object is retirement. Here too you may promise yourself a double gratification, for Picus often steals unexpectedly upon me, out of his own plantation, and conducts me from my concealment to sup with him. You know what kind of a table he keeps, œconomical, but elegant, and enlivened by his wit and cheerful conversation. Nevertheless consent to be my guest. You will not find a worse table, and perhaps will meet with better wine, for in that article I do not mean to yield the palm to Picus himself."

Lib. x. ep. ult.

The letter of Ficinus to which the foregoing is an answer, is dated xii. *Kal. Septemb.* (i. e.) *August* 21, 1494, consequently on the utmost latitude of calculation, Politian's must have been written within the space of little more than one month antecedently to his death, which happened upon the 24th. of September in the same year. If the latter years of Politian were clouded by a series of adverse and painful events, which could not fail to have a very unfavourable effect upon his feelings and happiness, his destiny was so far kind as it spared him the grief of witnessing the premature dissolution of his honoured friend Picus of Mirandula, and the ruin of his patron Piero de' Medici. (*h*)

(*h*) Menckenius has fallen into a gross error in enumerating the latter circumstance among the probable causes of Politian's decease. Charles VIII. instead of entering the

Such was the singular fatality attendant upon these illustrious friends, and associates in the pursuits of wisdom and science, that Picus did not survive Politian two entire months. The particulars of his last sickness and dissolution are involved in little less obscurity than that which envelopes some of the later transactions of his life. Pierius Valerianus relates an absurd story that his illness was preceded or superinduced by a settled melancholy and dejection, originating in some cause which his most intimate friends could not prevail upon him to explain: (*i*) but if this was really the case, it is improbable that these symptoms of despondency could have manifested themselves any considerable time before the death of Politian, whom we have seen, in

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Italian territory as he supposes, in the beginning of the year 1494, did not effect his passage over the Alps, and arrive at Asti, till *September* 9, 1494: and there as Guicciardini (*Lib.* i. *pag.* 45, *editionis* 1636, *in* 4to. *impress.*) informs us, he was constrained by sickness to remain inactive during a whole month. The imprudent measures therefore of Piero de' Medici which deprived him of the confidence of his fellow-citizens and led to his expulsion from Florence could not take place till after the decease of Politian. Menckenius has fallen into an additional mistake in supposing an ambiguous poem of one of the Strozzi, entitled "Ad Angelum Poetam" and which he imagines to be full of allusion to the plunder of the Medicean library, &c. &c. by the army of Charles VIII. could possibly relate to Politian.

(*i*) "Florentiam reversus, ubi studiorum suorum Musæum instituerat, antea quam virilitatis annos ingrederetur; mœstitiâ quâdam non levi de causâ affectus, tantam concepit ægritudinem, ut quodam modo vitam aspernari videretur; atque ita inter suspiria et occultas lamentationes, ægritudine suâ nulli amicorum communicatâ, virente eâ ætate desideratus est." (*P. Valerianus de infelicitate Literator.*)

his last correspondence with Ficinus, describing him as in the plenary exercise of his intellectual powers. The account of Giovan-Francesco is very far from corroborating that of P. Valerianus. He informs us that Picus, then at Florence, was seized with a fever of so insidious and malignant a nature as to baffle the power of medicine, and fell a victim to this dreadful malady on the thirteenth day. He describes him however, as retaining the possession of his mental faculties, partaking very devoutly of the usual ceremonies of the church, and conversing with his nephew Prince Alberto Pio, with his usual accuracy, upon the true grounds of christian fortitude and the most certain remedies against the fear of death. Having affectionately embraced his friends, and addressed them and his domestics in terms at once kind and consolatory, and strongly declarative of his perseverance in the principles of christianity, and the confidence which he derived from them, though not entirely free from some mixture of the superstition incident to the time; this illustrious young nobleman and scholar expired upon the 17th. day of November, A. D. 1494, in the thirty-third year of his age. His remains were interred in the church of S. Marco, near those of his former friend Politian, (*k*) having

(*k*) Politian's remains, agreeably to the desire which he had in his last illness expressed, were also invested with the habit of the same order, not by the vicar general of the congregation of S. Marco in person, but by his express commission. However this may be an argument of Politian's superstition, it may perhaps be allowed to rank amongst those which disprove the charge of atheism by some alleged against him.

been previously invested with the habit "de i fratri predicatori" by the hands of their general, the celebrated Hieronymus Savonarola. Leo Battista Alberti Descrizione d' Italia.

The well known epitaph inscribed upon the tomb of Picus,

JOANNES. JACET. HIC. MIRANDULA. CÆTERA. NORUNT
ET. TAGUS. ET. GANGES. FORSAN. ET. ANTIPODES.

is attributed to the pen of Hercules Strozza, who paid a similar tribute to the memory of Politian in the following lines:

QUIS Lycias sortes, quis Phthiæ carmina vatis,
Transmissos Deli quis neget hùc tripodas?
Quippe hìc assiduè Phœbus Musæque parentant,
Et caros lacrymis sæpè lavant cineres.
Quin si fata velint, tegerentur numina sub quâ
Angelus obdormit PULICIANUS humo.

HENCEFORTH thy oracles dread Lycian seer!
And Delian tripod—shall be honoured here.
Here Phœbus lingering stands: here every Muse
With ceaseless tears her favorite's urn bedews;
And could immortals die, her form divine
Where sleeps POLITIAN, gladly would enshrine.

The same scholar also indulged his poetic vein in the following singular fancy, allusive to the favorite project of Picus of reconciling the aristotelic and platonic philosophy.

See the authentic document respecting his burial, adduced by Mr. Roscoe in the "Appendix to his Life of Lorenzo de Medici," No. LXXXIII.

Dum stat Aristotelis cum magno rixa Platone
Et sedet Actæi muta caterva chori,
Nuper ad Elysios qui venerat, Angelus inquit,
Tantum (fabor enim) ponite dissidium:
Haud procul a nostro Picum modò liquimus Arno,
Qui vestras Latio solvit in orbe vices.
Quare age, si fas est, hunc ocyor advocet Arcas
Ultro avet hæc inter agmina disserere.
Adplausère omnes, exoratàque Sorore,
Virtutis nobis eripuére decus.

With Plato whilst the Stagirite still contending
To attention charms his Attic, shadowy throng,
Politian cries—(to Elysium late descending)
Sages! no more this war of words prolong.
Picus e'erwhile by Arno's fertile stream
I left, in Latium he your charge supplies:
Him, your long strife to end (for his the claim)
Let Hermes summon from yon upper skies.
The Manes shout applause—Fate seals his doom,
And gives the flow'r of science to the tomb.

The day which was signalized by the decease of Picus was the same in which Charles VIII. made his triumphant entrance into Florence. This monarch, informed of the malady of Picus and the extremity of his danger, sent with all possible speed two of his own confidential physicians to render him every assistance within the compass of their skill, and superadded to this mark of his concern a letter written with his own hand, and expressing in the most obliging terms his sympathy in his sufferings and earnest wishes for his recovery. The regret excited amongst the

Vita a Joan. Francis. script.

learned in all parts of Europe by the tidings of his decease was proportionable to the high reputation of his talents and character. To Germano de Ganai, rector of the university of Paris, Marsilius Ficinus thus expresses himself in a letter written a few months after this event. "You desire to be certified as to the truth of the report concerning the death of Picus, of which you at present entertain some doubt. If under these circumstances you cannot repress your sorrow, how much will it be augmented when you receive from me a confirmation of the fact: since grief alleviated by some dawn of hope is certainly more tolerable than when all hope is precluded by certainty. Alas, my Germano, would that the fact were really doubtful! I can scarce at the present moment confirm it for tears. In the month of November last, and upon that very day when the puissant monarch Charles VIII. entered Florence, our Mirandula deserted us." (*l*) Ficinus having added a brief

(*l*) "Eo die tam celebri quam postea Italiæ maxime funesto," says Jovius. *(Elog. in Picum.)* The grief of Ficinus on this occasion did not preclude him either from indulging in his usual high-flown *autitheses*, or acting the sycophant and courtier when writing to a Frenchman, in a manner little consistent with the obligations he was under to the family of the Medici, or his own dignity as a philosopher: thus he, "Noster Mirandula nos deseruit, tanto fermè dolore literatos afficiens, quanto Rex interim gaudio civitatem; ita providus loci Genius, et populi gaudio, literatorum gemitum compensavit, et pro extincto philosophico lumine Regium interea lumen accendit, ne forsan obscurior eo die Florentia videretur; Mirandulanum lumen extinctum inquam terris, cœlo redditum. Eâ enim Picus hilaris securitate ex hâc umbrâ vitæ migravit ut ab exilio quodam in coelestem patriam videretur proculdubio rediturus." . . . In the same letter Ficinus attempts what he terms an *Epigramma*, in

account of the works of Picus, and the state in which his manuscripts were found at the time of his decease, thus concludes his epistle. "To make you acquainted with another loss which learning has sustained and Florence witnessed; in the preceding autumn and in the month of September, died our friend Angelus Politianus, a person profoundly versed in Greek and Latin erudition. He had some time before published his "Miscellanea," "Sylvæ," some "Declamationes" and "Epistolæ," all composed with great elegance and acuteness; and was by daily minutes adding to the collection of his classical researches: but he like Picus unfortunately made use of abbreviated and arbitrary characters that cannot be decyphered; on which account literature has in both experienced a severer loss."

In the religious opinions held by Picus and inculcated in his works, he seems to have accorded chiefly with those of his own age and church, whom ecclesiastical writers have denominated by the general appellation of Mystics: though doubtless, if the minuter shades of difference be compared, he will as a religious writer, be found to possess his wonted originality, and to reason and judge on many speculative points in a manner peculiar to himself. His devotional feelings were indeed subject to variation, and their ardour was some-

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honour of Picus, highly characteristic of its author's manner. "Accipe," (says he) "hoc in eum Epigramma nostrum."

"Antistites secretiora mysteria raro admodum concedunt oculis, statimque recondunt: ita Deus mortalibus divinum Philosophum Joannem Picum Mirandulam, trigesimo *(tertio)* ætatis anno maturum."

times clouded by intervals of languor and depression, on some occasions they were elevated to a degree of innocent enthusiasm. (*m*) Stimulated by an impulse of zeal, he had once formed a resolution speedily to dispose of all his remaining wealth and effects in charitable donations, and taking the crucifix in his hand, to travel barefooted from city to city as a preacher of the gospel. This resolution he is said afterwards to have changed for that of joining the order of the Dominicans, or "Fratri Predicanti," at the instance of their general Hieronymus Savonarola. The character of this monk, who was the confessor of Picus, has given rise to much controversy in later times: by some he has been extolled as a saint and a martyr; by others he is characterised as an artful and designing hypocrite, who under a pretence of zeal for true religion and for civil liberty, sought only the gratification of his own malignant, turbulent, or ambitious views. The boldness with which he exclaimed at so early a period, against the corruptions of the church of Rome, and withstood the

(*m*) "Interdum alacritas illa animi propemodum elanguescebat et decidebat, majori quandoque nixu vires assumens, adeoque in Deum exarsisse illum memini, ut cum Ferrariæ in Pomario quodam de Christi amore colloquentes longis spaciaremur ambulacris in ejusmodi verba proruperit. "Tibi hæc dixerim, in arcanis recondito: Opes quæ mihi reliquæ sunt, (absolutis consummatisque elucubrationibus quibusdam) egenis elargiar; et crucifixo munitus, exertis nudatisque pedibus orbem peragrans, per castella, per urbes—Christum prædicabo:" accepi postea illum mutavisse propositum et Prædicatorum ordini se addicere statuisse: interim eorum quæ conceperat operum, quæque inchoaverat, maturabat editionem."

tyranny of that atrocious pontiff Alexander VI. the austerity of his life, the eloquence and fervency of his preaching, and the constancy and devotion with which he suffered a cruel death, procured him many advocates, not only amongst the members of the reformed church, but those also of his own communion, whose names stand high for piety, candour, and erudition. The dogmatic tone of Savonarola's decisions, and his extravagant pretention to miracles and divine revelations still remain to be satisfactorily vindicated : but with respect to the latter, it is less probable that he acted the studied part of a conscious impostor, than that he was himself the dupe of his own superstition. We cannot forget how strongly this species of delusion was excited and fostered by a credulous and unenlightened age, which as yet considered these privileges as the certain and indispensible attributes of superiour sanctity.

Savonarola probably, through his office of confessor to Picus as well as from other circumstances, had by degrees acquired a powerful ascendancy over the ingenuous mind of this amiable young nobleman. Flattered with the hope of securing to his fraternity such an accession of credit and authority as Picus would have proved, he endeavoured to convince him that the thoughts which he entertained of becoming a Dominican were the leadings of a divine impulse which it would be the height of impiety to resist. When Picus seemed to waver, and other views and reasons threatened to give to his final decision such a turn as was unfavorable to Savonarola's views, the monk had the assurance to threaten him

with the discipline of the scourge. This he affirmed was the most suitable argument to be used against those carnal reasonings which opposed the call of heaven and arose to impede him in the way of salvation! Picus, still hesitating and undecided, sought to compound with heaven for a short respite by redoubling his alms and charitable donations, of which the monk was in frequent instances made the dispenser. And as to deny that this species of compromise was inadmissible would have been to controvert an acknowledged principle of the Romish church, Savonarola, in a public sermon, addressed from the pulpit of S. Reparata to the populace of Florence, confidently declared it had been discovered to him by a divine revelation, that Prince Giovanni Pico of Mirandula, then recently deceased, though not consigned to the pains of hell, had not however been as yet admitted to the participation of celestial bliss, but was still enduring the flames of purgatory;—doubtless for having so long hesitated to assume the habit of S. Domenico!

Vide Vit. Joan. Pici a Francisco. Nepote ejus script. ad fin.

Of the compilers of brief and fugitive "Elogia" during the lapse of several centuries, many relying on the report of their predecessors, have assigned to Picus an honourable nich in those temples which they have been desirous to erect to the shades of departed literary heroes. By most he has been extolled in general terms as the miracle of his age, and as blest with talents and acquirements that rarely fall to the lot of mortals. Some, as it was probable would be the case with those who satisfied with unauthorised memorials contemn the labour of inquiry,

have overstepped the bounds of probability and truth, and ascribed to him powers and qualifications which he did not possess. No attempt seems hitherto to have been made towards a regular account of his life, if we except the brief and unsatisfactory production of his nephew, Giovan-Francesco, or such as are founded wholly upon it. The work of Giovan-Francesco is little more than an enthusiastic panegyric on the religious and moral character of his uncle; and the author dwells with the most evident pleasure on such superstitious particulars as the sober sense of a more enlightened age would rather have taught him to pass over, as instances of those weaknesses which in some degree tarnish the lustre of the most brilliant characters, in this state of imperfection. By recognising Picus as his own biographer, and comparing with notices deduced from his own writings such as are furnished by the most conspicuous of his immediate contemporaries, an accurate estimate may at length be formed of his real talents and character. Nor, it is hoped, will the present attempt to render him this justice be deemed superfluous, even though the merits of this long extolled prodigy of literature fall somewhat short of those high expectations which the reader had previously been led to form.

Under all circumstances however, Picus it is presumed still merits the admiration of those who contemplate with philosophic curiosity the powers and capabilities of the human mind. He still deserves to be ranked amongst the few, who have successively been in the literary hemisphere what comets and meteors are

in the natural. By such *phœnomena* nature occasionally takes a pleasure in exciting the wonder and speculation of mankind; but she presents them but rarely, and after long protracted intervals.

JOANNIS PICI MIRANDULÆ DEPRECATORIA AD DEUM.

Alme Deus! summâ qui majestate verendus,
Verè unum in triplici numine numen habes;
Cui super excelsi flammantia mœnia mundi,
Angelici servit turba beata chori:
Çujus et immensum hoc, oculis spectabile nostris,
Omnipotens quondam dextra creavit opus:
Æthera qui torques, qui nutu dirigis orbem,
Cujus ab imperio fulmina missa cadunt:
Parce precor miseris! nostras precor ablue sordes!
Ne nos justa tui poena furoris agat.
Quod si nostra pari pensentur debita lance,
Et sit judicii norma severa tui,
Quis queat horrendum Viventis ferre flagellum
Vindicis, et plagas sustinuisse graves?
Non ipsa iratæ restabit Machina dextræ;
Machina supremo non peritura die.
Quæ mens non primæ damnata ab origine culpæ?
Aut quæ non proprio crimine facta nocens?
At certè ille ipse es proprium cui parcere semper
Justitiamque pari qui pietate tenes,
Præmia qui ut meritis longè majora rependis,
Supplicia admissis sic leviora malis.
Namque tua est nostris major clementia culpis,
Et dare non dignis, res magè digna Deo est.
Quanquam sat digni, si quos dignatur amare

Qui quos non dignos invenit, ipse facit.
Ergo tuos placido miserans precor aspice vultu,
Seu servos mavis, seu magis esse reos.
Nempe reos, nostræ si spectes crimina vitæ,
Ingratæ nimium crimina mentis opus.
Aut tua si potius in nobis munera cernas,
Munera præcipuis nobilitata bonis ;
Nos sumus ipsa olim tibi quos natura ministros,
Mox fecit gnatos gratia sancta tuos.
Sed premit heu ! miseros tantæ indulgentia sortis,
Quos fecit gnatos gratia, culpa reos.
Culpa reos fecit, sed vincat gratia culpam,
Vt tuus in nostro crimine crescat honos.
Nam tua sive aliter sapientia, sive potestas,
Nota suas mundo prodere possit opes ;
Major in erratis bonitatis gloria nostris ;
Illeque præ cunctis fulget amandus amor,
Qui potuit cœlo Dominum deducere ab alto,
Inque crucem summi tollere membra Dei,
Ut malè contractas patrio de semine sordes,
Ablueret lateris sanguis et unda tui :
Sic amor et pietas tua, Rex mitissime, tantis
Dat mala materiem suppeditare bonis.
O amor ! O pietas ! nostris bene provida rebus,
O bonitas ! servi facta ministra tui,
O amor ! O pietas ! nostris malè cognita sæclis,
O bonitas ! nostris nunc propè victa malis,
Da precor huic tanto, qui semper fervet, amori
Ardorem in nostris cordibus esse parem.
Da Sathanæ imperium, cui tot servîsse per annos
Pœnitet, excusso deposuisse jugo.
Da precor, extingui vesanæ incendia mentis,
Et tuus in nostro pectore vivat amor ;
Ut cum mortalis perfunctus munere vitæ
Ductus erit Dominum spiritus ante suum,
Promissi regni felici sorte potitus,
Non DOMINUM, sed te sentiat esse PATREM.

Translated by Sir Thomas More.

A PRAIER OF PICUS MIRANDULA UNTO GOD.

O HOLY GOD! of dreadfull majestee,
Verely one in three, and three in one,
Whome Angels serve whose worke all creatures bee.
Whiche heaven and earth directest all alone,
We thee beseche good Lorde with wofull mone,
Spare us wretches, and washe awaye our gilt,
That we be not by thy juste anger spilt.

In straite balaunce of rigorous judgement
If thou shouldest our sinne ponder and waye:
Who able were to beare thy punishement?
The whole engine of all this worlde I saie,
The engine that enduren shall for aye,
With suche examinacion might not stande
Space of a moment in thine angry hande.

Who is not borne in sinne originall?
Who dothe not actuall sinne in sundry wise?
But thou good Lorde art he that sparest all,
With pitious mercy tempering justice:
For as thou dost rewardes us devise
Above our merite, so dost thou dispence
Thy punishment farre under our offence.

More is thy mercy farre then all our sinne,
To geve them also that unworthy bee,
More godly is, and more mercy therein.
Howbeit, worthy ynough are thei pardee,
Be thei never so unworthy: whom that hee
List to accept, whiche where so ever he taketh
Whom he unworthy findeth worthy maketh.

Wherefore good Lorde that aye mercifull art,
Unto thy grace and soveraine dignitee,
We sely wretches crye with humble heart,
Our sinne forgeat, and our malignitee,
With piteous eyes of thy benignitee,
Frendely looke on us once, thine owne we bee,
Servauntes or sinners whither it liketh thee!

Sinners if thou our crime beholde certaine,
Our crime the worke of our uncorteyse mynde,
But if thy giftes thou beholde againe,
Thy giftes noble wonderfull and kinde,
Thou shalt us then the same parsones finde,
Which are to thee, and which have be long space,
Servauntes by nature, children by thy grace.

But this thy goodnes wringeth us alas,
For we, whom grace had made thy children dere,
Are made thy gilty folke by our trespace,
Sinne hath us gilty made this many a yere,
But let thy grace, thy grace that hath no pere,
Of our offence surmounten all the preace,
That in our sinne thine honour may encreace.

For though thy wisedome, though thy soveraigne powre,
May other wise appeare sufficiently,
As thinges whiche thy creatures every howre,
All with one voice declare and testifie,
Thy goodnes, yet thy singuler mercy,
Thy piteous heart, thy gracious indulgence
Nothing so clerely sheweth as our offence.

What but our synne hath shewed that mighty love,
Whiche able was thy dreadfull magestee,
To drawe downe into earth fro heaven above,
And crucifie God, that we poore wretches wee,
Should from our filthy sinne yclensed bee,

With bloode and water of thine owne side,
That streamed from thy blessed woundes wide.

Thy love and pitie thus O heavenly king,
Our evill maketh matter of thy goodnes,
O love, O pitie our wealth aie providing,
O goodnes serving thy servauntes in distres,
O love, O pitie, wel nigh now thankles
O goodnes mightie gracious and wise,
And yet almost vainquished with our vyce.

Graunt, I thee praie, suche heat into mine heart,
That to this love of thine may be egal:
Graunt me fro Sathanas service to astart,
With whom me rueth so long to have be thrall.
Graunt me good Lorde, and creatour of all,
The fiame to quenche of all sinnefull desire,
And in thy love sette all mine heart a fire.

That whan the jorney of this deadly life
My sely goost hath finished, and thence
Departen must: without his fleshly wife
Alone into his Lordes high presence
He maye thee finde: O well of indulgence,
In thy lordeship not as a LORDE: but rather
As a very tender loving FATHER.

MEMOIRS

OF

SANNAZARIUS.

DA SACRO CINERI FLORES:—HIC ILLE MARONI
SYNCERUS MUSA PROXIMUS UT TUMULO.

BEMBUS.

THE family of SANNAZARIUS is said to have been originally of Spanish extraction: but settled at an early period at Santo Nazaro, a flourishing town situated between the Tesino and the Po, where it was long conspicuous for nobility and opulence. Reduced at length by the calamities of war, the more immediate progenitors of this poet removed to Naples, where GIACOMO SANNAZZARO was born A. D. 1458. At that period Alfonsus of Aragon, being at the point of death, transferred the crown of Naples to Ferdinand his illegitimate son. Sannazarius had the misfortune to lose his father before he arrived at

Ne' campi di Lomellina, in the duchy of Milan.

V. Kal. Sextil. festo die S. Nazarii.

an age of sufficient discretion to be left at his own disposal. His mother MASELLA, a woman of masculine spirit, being compelled to struggle with great pecuniary difficulties, and finding herself unable longer to support her former rank at Naples, retired with her young family into Umbria, and took up her residence at Nocera di Pagani. In this retirement, Sannazarius passed a considerable portion of his early youth. (*a*) He had, previously to his removal from Naples, acquired the elements of the Latin and Greek languages, under the tuition of Junianus Maius, whom with grateful recollection he frequently celebrates in his poems. His preceptor, aware of the promising talents of young Giacomo was particularly urgent in advising his mother to allow him, as early as circumstances would permit, to resume his studies at Naples; and in compliance with this advice she at length returned again to take up her abode in that city.

Sannazarii Vita a Joan. Ant. Vulpio conscripta.

At this time flourished Jovianus Pontanus, (*b*) whose house frequented by the

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(*a*) Vide Elegiam "Quod pueritiam egerit in Picentinis," *(inter poemata ejus.)*

(*b*) JOANNES JOVIANUS PONTANUS, who makes a very conspicuous figure among the learned of these times, was born at Cerreto in Umbria, A. D. 1426. He afterwards settled at Naples, where he obtained the patronage and favour of Alfonso, and of Ferdinand his successor: and filled the highest offices of the state. He eminently distinguished himself, not only as a poet, but also as a writer on various subjects. His poetical works were published by Aldus in 8vo. 1505, and again in two volumes, 1513, 1518. His prose works at the same press, in three volumes 8vo. 1518, 1519.

flower of the studious Neapolitan youth, and especially by the nobility, was considered as the temple of wisdom and of the muses. The "Academia Pontana" and its particular usages have been already noticed. It was in consequence of his reception as a member of this literary society, that Giacomo assumed the name of ACTIUS SYNCERUS by which we find him so often distinguished.

Sannazarius formed an early attachment of the most tender kind to Carmosina Bonifacia,

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It has been justly a subject of surprize, that Pontanus who was secretary of state to Ferdinand, and for a long series of years busily occupied in public affairs, should nevertheless have found leisure and inclination for the pursuits of literature; in which he was so successful, that many have considered him as the most accomplished poet and scholar of his age. Le Sieur Lionardo Nicodemo, has pronounced Pontanus to have been with regard to Politian, what Entellus was to Dares. More rigid critics affirm that Pontanus injured his own reputation as a poet, by writing hastily whatever occurred to him, and neglecting afterwards to retrench any part of what he had thus composed. So sparing was he of the *file*, that it was his custom rather to add than diminish, upon every revisal of his works. But as M. Baillet observes, he has one fault still greater, and more injurious to his character, on which it has indeed infixed an indelible stain; and that is the gross indecency that pervades many of his poetical compositions. He is said to be himself the author of the following inscription, which was after his decease engraven on his tomb:

SUM JOANNES JOVIANUS PONTANUS,
Quem amavêrunt bonæ Musæ,
Suspexêrunt viri probi,
Honestavêrunt reges, domini.
Scis quis sim, aut potius quis fuerim;
Ego verò te, hospes! noscere in tenebris nequeo:
Sed teipsum ut noscas rogo: vale.

He died according to some accounts, in the year 1503; or as others inform us, in 1505.

a young Neapolitan lady of exquisite beauty, but in his suit had the misfortune to experience all the anxiety and solicitude incident to one whose passion meets not with a reciprocal return: and such painful feelings gave rise to many of those querulous sonnets and *canzoni* of his which are yet extant. (*c*) In compositions of this kind, Sannazarius is considered as having surpassed every other poet from the days of Petrarch. Whilst thus occupied, he lost his mother, whom he very feelingly laments in his Arcadia. To banish if possible the remembrance of his unkind mistress, he undertook a journey to a remote part of France, which country some suppose him to have described under the above-mentioned romantic appellation. (*d*) But finding his uneasiness rather increased than diminished in proportion to his distance from the object beloved, he again returned with all possible expedition to Naples. On his arrival however

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(*c*) Jo. Antonius Vulpius *(in vitâ Sannazarii, ejus Operibus Patavii* 1719, *in* 4to. *impress. præfixâ)* from whose narrative many of the notices concerning Sannazarius here given are deduced, in common with others of his learned countrymen, considers the Italian sonnet as very nearly allied to the Latin epigram *(p.* vi.*)*

(*d*) In the former edition of these memoirs it was erroneously affirmed that the "Arcadia" was first published in 1514. An edition however of this admired and well known production was printed at Milan so early as the year 1504. For this information I am indebted to Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. the author of an elegant and splendid work, entitled "An Historical Memoir on Italian Tragedy." London, 1799, in 4to. Heyne mentions also in his "Notizia de' Libri Rari," an edition of the Arcadia printed *in Venezia*, 1504, in 4to.

he had the mortification to be informed that his Carmosina had been cut off by a premature decease during his absence. She is the person whom he is understood to deplore in those of his Italian and Latin poems, wherein he is found lamenting the death of Phyllis. Vulpii Vita Sannazarii, ut supra.

The increasing celebrity of Sannazarius as a scholar, and especially as a poet, having already attracted the notice of Ferdinand king of Naples, Frederic that monarch's younger son who was greatly attached to poesy, sent for and retained him near his own person; and henceforward honoured him with his special patronage, confidence and friendship. The same talents of Sannazarius recommended him to the favour of king Ferdinand himself, and to that of Alfonso duke of Calabria, who was the next heir to the crown. Under the latter, who had the reputation of an able general, he served in the Etruscan war. He also attended him in an expedition for the recovery of Otranto, which had been seized and garrisoned by the Turks. Afterwards, when Ferdinand had taken up arms in behalf of his son-in-law, Ercole duke of Ferrara, against pope Sixtus and his allies, Alfonso took with him Sannazarius to the sieges of Nomento and Tivoli. This general however being overcome in an action near Indovina, seems to have lost on this occasion a portion of the fame which he had previously acquired. If the poet's own assertion is to be credited, he sedulously devoted all the leisure he could procure even in camps and military expeditions to poetical studies: and one of his most celebrated epigrams is that which he composed under such circumstances,

in praise of the great actions of Ladislaus, a former king of Naples, who had been an especial benefactor to his family. (*e*)

Vulpius ut supra.

The period immediately ensuing was pregnant with the misfortunes and ultimate ruin of the house of Aragon. Charles VIII. of France, anxious to possess himself of the dominion of all Italy, had levied a powerful army for the purpose of wresting from the hands of Ferdinand the Neapolitan sceptre; but whilst this evil was yet pending, Ferdinand, now far advanced in years, died. Alfonso, his successor, distrusting the fidelity of the Neapolitan nobles and commonalty, to whom his severity had rendered him odious, forgot his former military spirit, left all to fortune, and flying into Sicily, there soon afterwards ended his days. Ferdinand his son, whose manners were more mild and popular than those of his father, assumed the reins of

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(*e*) IN TUMULUM LADISLAI REGIS.

Miraris niveis pendentia saxa columnis,
Hospes, et hunc, acri qui sedet altus equo?
Quid si animos, roburque Ducis, præclaraque nôsses
Pectora, et invictas dura per arma manus!
Hic Capitolinis dejecit sedibus hostem:
Bisque triumphatâ victor ab urbe redit:
Italiamque omnem bello concussit, et armis:
Intulit Etrusco signa tremenda mari.
Neve foret Latio tantùm diademate felix;
Ante suos vidit Gallica sceptra pedes.
Quumque rebellantem pressisset pontibus Arnum,
Mors vetuit sextam claudere Olympiadem.
I nunc, regna para, fastusque attolle superbos:
Mors etiam magnos obruit atra Deos.

(*Epigrammat. Lib.* i. *ep.* 4.)

government, and made all the opposition in his power to the Gallic forces. When however, in consequence of a contest so unequal, he saw himself despoiled of his hereditary kingdom, he still lost not his presence of mind, but patiently awaited a more favorable opportunity of vindicating his rights. Charles happened soon afterwards opportunely to return to France, and this young prince with great bravery, expedition and prudence, attacked and routed his enemies, and repossessed himself of his crown: but a premature decease overtook him in the midst of his exertions for the restoration of order in his distracted kingdom.

The regal authority now devolved upon Frederic, the uncle of the deceased king. It might reasonably be expected that Sannazarius, who in the most adverse circumstances had evinced an unshaken loyalty to the house of Aragon; would at this juncture have attained the highest honours; but the fact was otherwise. Whilst those whose deserts were inferiour, were loaded with presents and lucrative appointments, Sannazarius obtained only a moderate annual pension, and a suburban villa, situated on a declivity of the promontory of Posilipo, and denominated Mergillina; which had been a favorite residence of former monarchs, rather for the amenity of its situation and its fine marine prospect, than for the fruitfulness of its soil. Some writers affirm that Sannazarius inwardly chagrined on this occasion intended to make the king sensible of his resentment by a Latin epigram, in which he complains "se agricolam a

Vulpius ut supra.

rege factum."(*f*) Afterwards however, captivated by the charming scenery of the place we find him thus expatiating in terms of the highest poetical eulogy on the king's liberality and the pleasantness of his beloved Mergillina, which became the delight and glory of his muse.

AD VILLAM MERGILLINAM.

RUPIS O sacræ pelagique custos,
VILLA! Nympharum domus, et propinquæ
DORIDOS, regum decus una quondam
Deliciæque;

Nunc meis tantum requies Camœnis,
Urbis invisas quoties querelas
Et parùm fidos popularis auræ
Linquimus æstus:

Tu mihi solos nemorum recessus
Das, et hærentes per opaca laurus
Saxa, tu fontes, Aganippidumque
Antra recludis.

Nam simul tete repeto, tuasque
Sedulus mecum veneror Napæas,

(*f*) AD FEDERICUM REGEM.

SCRIBENDI studium mihi tu, FEDERICE, dedisti,
Ingenium ad laudes dum trahis omne tuas.
Ecce suburbanum rus, et nova prædia donas:
Fecisti vatem, nunc facis agricolam.

(Epigrammat. Lib. i. epig. 1.)

Colle, MERGILLINA! tuo repentè
Pegasis unda

Effluit, de quâ chorus ipse Phœbi,
Et chori PHŒBUS pater atque princeps
Nititur plures mihi jam canenti
Ducere rivos.

Ergo tu nobis HELICON, et udæ
Phocidos saltus, hederisque opacum
THESPIÆ rupis nemus, et canoro
Vertice PINDUS.

I, puer! blandi comitem laboris
Affer e primâ citharam columnâ;
Affer et flores: procul omnis a me
Cura recedat.

Principis nostri decus atque laudes
Fama per latas spatiata terras
Evehat, quà Sol oriens cadensque
Frena retorquet;

Quàque non notos populos et urbes
Damnat æternis Helice pruinis
Quàque ferventis cumulos arenæ
Dissipat Auster.

Ille crescentes veneratus annos
Vatis antiquum referentis ortum
Stirpis, et clarum genus, et potentûm
Nomen avorum,

Contulit largâ numerosa dextrâ
Dona, et ignavæ stimulos juventæ
Addidit; sylvas, et amica Musis
Otia præbens.

TO HIS VILLA MERGILLINA.

HIGH built upon the sacred steep,
Queen of the rock, and azure deep,
VILLA! the green-hair'd nymph's retreat
Belov'd—oft neighbouring DORIS for thee leaves
Her shelly grot beneath the waves:—
Thou wert of kings the honour'd seat:

Now to a humbler Lord consign'd,
Thy solitudes a refuge kind
To me afford,—and to the muse;—
Oft as enamoured of a rural life,
Of fickle crowds the wayward strife
We leave, and folly's pageant shews,

For hanging walks, and darksome groves,
Where sooth'd imagination roves,
'Mid shelving rocks, with laurel crown'd;
Sequester'd caves, dark glades, and arched bowers;
Clear founts, with rich poetic powers
Endu'd, and purest classic ground.

To thee, impell'd by fond desire
Whene'er my eager steps retire,
Lov'd MERGILLINA—bending low,
I venerate the Powers that haunt thy woods:—
Straight, o'er the rocks in gushing floods
Effus'd,—PEGASEAN waters flow.

Then, in full choir, the harmonious nine,
To aid my rapturous song combine;
PHOEBUS himself sublimest themes

Inspires, and as its current full and strong
The rill miraculous pours along,
Strives to deduce a thousand streams.

Be then our HELICON! be thine
As his prophetic springs, divine;
And let thy shady summits wave
As those PARNASSIAN regions far renown'd,
Whose airy heights, with ivy crown'd,
To song its rapturous impulse gave.

Boy—from the nearest column bring
The harmonious lyre, whose trembling string
Vibrates accordant to my lay:—
Haste, and my path bestrew with vernal flow'rs;
Let pleasure lead the circling hours,
And grief and care be far away.

His princely name, through regions round
Fame, let thy echoing clarion sound,
Whose praise my grateful song inspires—
Where the bright sun, in orient state ascends
Heaven's shining path, and where he bends
In downward flight his setting fires:

To realms unknown, far northern shores,
Where bleak, eternal winter hoars
With endless frost his drear domains:
To burning climes, swept by the sultry blast,
Where borne impetuous o'er the waste,
Torrents of sand obscure the plains.

Dear to my lyre! his pious care
He gives the favour'd Muse to share;
And while the bard, in life's decline,
Warbles—on themes illustrious still intent,

His virtuous deeds—his high descent;
The honours of his ancient line;—

Such gifts—as royal bounty showers,
With no reluctant hand he pours;
And deigns in youthful breasts to aid
Sublime desire of literary praise:—
To song dispensing liberal ease,
PARNASSIAN haunt, and sylvan shade.

In this his charming rural solitude however, Sannazarius was not permitted to enjoy any lasting repose. After the lapse of four years, Lewis, successor to Charles VIII. in the throne of France, and Ferdinand king of Spain, at the instigation of pope Alexander, formed a confederacy for the expulsion of Frederic from the throne of Naples, who having been finally overcome, and despoiled of his kingdom, chose rather to reside as a voluntary exile in the court of France, than to betake himself for protection to the Spanish monarch who had so basely violated the ties of consanguinity.

Vulpius ut supra.

When Frederic deserted by the greater part of those who had flattered him in his prosperity was thus compelled to abandon his capital and kingdom, Sannazarius afforded a most laudable example of disinterested fidelity. He still followed the fortunes of his royal patron: he sold his possessions to afford a temporary supply for the alleviation of the fallen monarch's exigences: he attended him into France, shared in all his dangers and fatigues, and continued firmly attached to him as long as he lived. We find him in one of his Latin

poems feelingly lamenting, at once his benefactor's misfortunes, and his own: and claiming from posterity the credit which he deserved, for having thus faithfully discharged the obligations of gratitude and friendship.

" Ipse per infestos tecum, Federice, labores
Multa adii terrâ—multa perîcla mari,
Tuscorumque vadis, Ligurumque exercitus undis,
Postremò litus Massiliense subî.
Jam Rhodanum, Volcasque feros, Vocontiaque arva
Legimus, et fines, Belgica terra, tuos.
Bisque pruinosas cursu superavimus Alpes,
Bis metas magni vidimus oceani.
* * * * * * * * * * *
Prosit amicitiæ, sanctum per sæcula nomen
Servâsse, et firmam regibus usque fidem."

In the year 1503, Sannazarius again returned to his native city, and once more frequenting the court, obtained in particular the favour of the reigning queen. He now attached himself to Cassandra Marchesia, one of this queen's ladies of honour, who with great personal beauty seems to have united mental accomplishments and literary attainments beyond those which usually fall to the lot of her sex. (*g*) But Sannazarius was now too far advanced in years to feel as formerly the ardent desires and tumultuous perturba-

(*g*) Sannazarius himself, inscribing to this lady an edition of his Italian poems, terms her " delle belle eruditissima, delle erudite bellissima." *(Rime di M. Jacopo Sannazaro: In Venez.* M.D.XCII.*)*

tions incident to a youthful passion. His present love was of a more philosophic kind, and Cassandra is considered merely as his poetical mistress, and the chaste object of his platonic attachment. However this might be, their esteem was mutual; and a confidential intercourse continued to subsist between them till the poet's decease: nor does it appear that Cassandra ever formed any matrimonial connection.

Vulpius ut supra.

The literary associates of Sannazarius were numerous, and consisted of such as were most celebrated for their talents and learning in this classic age. In his friendships he is said to have been uniformly ardent and sincere. Of the memory of Pontanus, who had given a powerful impulse to his youthful studies, he testified his grateful remembrance by assisting in collecting his works after that scholar's decease, and arranging them for the press. He is commended for his probity, his love of justice and abhorrence of litigation. By some however he is numbered among the ardent and unreserved votaries of pleasure. He is said in his old age to have affected all the levity and gallantry of youth. The indisposition which terminated his life was brought on by grief and chagrin, on account of the demolition of part of his delightful villa of Mergillina, in decorating which he had taken peculiar delight. Philibert de Nassau, prince of Orange, and general of the Emperor's forces, was the author of this outrage on taste and the muses. The injured poet, a few days before the termination of his own life, being told, that prince had been slain in battle, was heard to utter the following extempore effusion:

" La Vendetta d' Apollo, ha fatto Marte."

He expired soon afterwards at Naples, and it is said in the house of Cassandra Marchesia, A. D. 1530, in the seventy-second year of his age.

Vulpius relates that Sannazarius, on some particular occasion, was greatly struck by a public discourse pronounced by Ægidius of Viterbo, an Augustine monk; and what is more remarkable, by his ingenious application of some particular line of Virgil to the illustration of his religious argument. He is said thence to have conceived a lasting esteem for the sacred orator, and to have formed in consequence of this occurrence the first design of composing his celebrated poem " De Partu Virginis." The different portions of this poem, in the order in which they were written, Sannazarius constantly recited to his friend Franciscus Pudericus, a most fastidious critic, to please whose ear he is reported to have sometimes varied the same line in ten different ways. The poem " De Partu Virginis" contains many brilliant and highly finished passages. Sannazarius spent twenty years in retouching and finishing it: whence he was termed by some " statarius poeta." But notwithstanding the high compliments, paid no less to the piety, than to the learning and genius of the author in those honorary briefs which it procured him from two supreme pontiffs; the agency of Dryads and Nereids,—the books of the Sybils, substituted for those of the prophets: Proteus predicting the mystery of the incarnation, and in a word, the care observed not to employ in it any agent,

Vulpius in vitâ Sannazarii.

or even name or term not strictly classical, have given this poem an air of *gentilism* strangely inconsistent with its subject; and in the opinion of some, rendered the motives of the author exceedingly questionable. Critics however have not been wanting who have undertaken to vindicate the judgment of Sannazarius upon this occasion. (*h*)

Vulpius in vitâ Sannazarii apud finem. Gravina, &c.

(*h*) Prefixed to an edition of this poem, published by Aldus in 1528, we meet with the following dedication addressed to Pope Clement VII. which is perhaps not less remarkable for ease and elegance of versification, than for the extravagant flattery which it contains.

CLEMENTI SEPTIMO PONTIFICI MAXIMO ACTIUS SYNCERUS.

MAGNE parens, custosque hominum, cui jus datur uni
Claudere cœlestes et reserare fores,
Occurrent si qua in nostris malè firma libellis,
Deleat errores æqua litura meos.
Imperiis, Venerande, tuis submittimus illos;
Nam sine te, rectâ non licet ire viâ.—
Ipse manu, sacrisque potens Podalyrius herbis
Ulcera Pæoniâ nostra levabis ope;
Quippe mihi toto nullus, te præter, in orbe,
Triste salutiferâ leniet arte malum.
Rarus honos, summo se præside posse tueri;
Rarior, a summo præside posse legi.

The briefs with which Sannazarius was honoured by Leo X. and Clement VII. may also be found prefixed to the edition of this poem, published by Aldus in 8vo. 1528. The sincerity of that deference and respect which the poet professes for the holy see is as problematical as his religion. On consulting such editions of his poetical works as have not been curtailed, we find several of the supreme pontiffs made the subject of his severest sarcasm. It were difficult to say what offence could justify Sannazarius for the following flippant invective, against the family, assumed name,

The ELEGIES of Sannazarius breathe a delicacy and tenderness which entitle them to rank with those of Tibullus. He thus expatiates on his own constancy and presumes on that of his mistress.

— Si nostra tuo superesset funere vita,
(Dii tamen in ventos omen abire sinant)
Ipse ego composito venerarer membra sepulchro,
Thura ferens moestâ moestus et ipse manu,
Umbrarumque sacer custos, tumulique sacerdos,
Concinerem tremulâ tristia verba lyrâ:
Nec me complexu quisquam divelleret urnæ
Quin cineri moriens oscula summa darem.
At si, quod potius cupio, tibi fata dedissent
Claudere formosâ lumina nostra manu,
Tunc mihi cum caros vultus spectare liceret:
Atque animâ tecum jam fugiente loqui:

---

and personal peculiarities of Leo X. who had honoured his poem with the flattering notice before-mentioned.

IN LEONEM X. PONT. MAX.

Sumere maternis titulos cum posset ab Ursis,
Cœculus hic noster, maluit esse Leo.
Quid tibi cum magno commune est, Talpa! Leone?
Non cadit in turpes nobilis ira feras.
Ipse licet cupias animos simulare Leonis,
Non Lupus hoc genitor—non sinit Ursa parens.
Ergo aliud tibi prorsus habendum est Cœcule, nomen,
Nam cuncta ut possis, non potes esse Leo.

(Epigr. Lib. ii. *Ep.* lvii.)

The following is still more severe.

IN LEONEM X. PONT. MAX.

Sacra sub extremâ si forte requiritis horâ
Cur Leo non potuit sumere,—vendiderat.

Ipsa meos tumulo manes vesana vocares:
Inque tuo legeres ossa perusta sinu:
Flebilis et longos scindens ad busta capillos,
Clamares nomen jam moritura meum:
Tunc cineri, et mutæ persolvens justa favillæ:
Misceres rutilis lilia cana rosis,
Illic mœsta dies, illic consumere noctes
Optares: nec te vinceret alter amor:
Sed memor usque mei, canis veneranda capillis,
Afferres tremulâ munera cara manu.
O mihi dum tumulo tales reddantur honores:
Tam lentam Lachesis scindat avara colum:
(*i*)Non ut nostra novos Arabum bibat urna liquores:
Ustus et Assyrio spiret odore cinis:

(*i*) Dr. Johnson observes, that Pope had sought for images and sentiments from modern writers of Latin poetry. Perhaps he had an eye to this passage of Sannazarius, when he composed these lines of his epitaph on Gay:

——— "Not that here thy bust
Is mix'd with heroes, or with kings thy dust,
But that the virtuous," &c.

The same critic has pointed out the more palpable imitation of Ludovicus Areostus, in Pope's epitaph on himself. *(Life of Pope.)* He has remarked after Goldsmith, that Parnell's "Bookworm" is the "Tinea" of Beza, and his "Gay Bacchus" the "Gratiarum Convivium" of Augurellus, with modern applications. Of Prior he says, "I have traced him among the French epigrammatists, and have been informed that he poached for prey among obscure authors." The reader will probably think with me that Prior's "Love disarmed," a poem which Vincent Bourne has translated into Latin verse, is itself in some parts little more than a translation from the following lines of the "Epitaphium Amoris" Cæsaris Ducchii, *(Vid. Carm. Illustr. Poetar. Italor. vol.* iv. *pag.* 119. *Florent.* 1719, 8vo.*)*

—Dum blanditur, facilisque indulget ut Ægle
Marmoreâ tangat noxia tela manu,

Aut ut clara mei notescat fama sepulchri,
Altaque marmoreus sydera tangat apex:
Sed magis ut liceat longas audire querelas:
Et gerere a lachrymis serta rigata tuis.

Illa animo versans, quâ posset tuta triumphum
Magnificum titulis addere fraude suis,
Incautum aggreditur puerum, ac nil tale timentem,
Et statim ex humeris abstulit arma dei.
Mox arcum intorquens curvatum cominus illi,
Tu qui nuper eras imperiosus Amor,
Otia qui Divûm toties hominumque revolvens
Duxisti ante aras clara trophæa tuas:
I modo, dixit, inops vivas, & sceptra perosus,
Vincula & imperium disce subire meum.
Et sævo tenerum trajecit vulnere pectus,
Vulnere quo tacti tot periêre homines.
Insolitum ardorem tunc ipsæ hausêre medullæ,
Et fuit igne suo pulcher adustus Amor:
Ignoransque locum cui se committere posset,
Virginis in tenero delituit gremio:
Et velut in tutâ requievit conditus arce;
Atque Dei reliquum nil nisi nomen erat.
Hæc vero in miseros contorquens spicula amantes,
Illa Amor—illa fuit maxima in orbe Dea, &c.

The epigram of Sannazarius *(Ep. Lib.* i. *ep.* 43.*)*

DE AUFIDIO.

Dum caput Aufidio tractat chirurgus, et ipsum
Altiùs exquirit, quò videat cerebrum,
Ingemit Aufidius, quid me, chirurge, fatigas?
Cum subii rixam non habui cerebrum.

Is evidently the original of the following which occurs in the volume entitled "Elegant Extracts," in verse.

A humorous fellow in a tavern late,
Being drunk and valiant gets a broken pate;
The surgeon with his instruments and skill,
Searches the skull deeper and deeper still:
To feel his brains and try if they were sound:
And as he keeps ado about the wound,

——Should fate my widowed arms deprive
Of thee their joy—of thee their constant care:
Reckless of vows that bid thee long survive,
And form my fond affection's ardent prayer:

I'd give my love the incense of a tear,
In sadness bending o'er her honour'd urn,
My pensive steps should ever linger near,
My streaming eyes should ne'er forget to mourn.

To sorrows, such as sever'd loves require,
To solemn sounds—and dirges duly paid,
My trembling hand should strike the mournful lyre,
And plaintive accents soothe her hov'ring shade:

Till eager grasping in my fond embrace
The marble where inurn'd her ashes lay,
Its polish'd form my dying lips should press,
And pass in sighs my latest breath away.

But if, (nor kindest heaven the boon deny,)
Thy gentle hand these dying eyes shall close,
Thy care observant watch my spirit fly,
And give my clay-cold limbs to soft repose—

Then still, while fate permits, my fleeting shade
Partial to her so lov'd, shall flutter near;
Gaze on her charms with rapture still survey'd,
And breathe its parting whispers in her ear.

The fellow cries, good surgeon spare your pains,
When I began this brawl I had no brains.

Probably other unacknowledged obligations of the moderns to these authors heretofore little known, might occur to an attentive reader.

Thy griefs, thy plaints, thy frenzy's self shall please,
While from those eyes fast flows the balmy tear:
Thy pious care my manes to appease,
And each kind act of thine be doubly dear.

My scatter'd dust, collected from the pyre,
And to its vase with pious rites consign'd,
The sad deposit shall thy arms require,
With frantic cries that tremble on the wind.

Thy lavish hand shall deck my rising tomb,
And choicest wreaths, a grateful offering bring;
There shall the fragrant rose and lily bloom,
Diffusing round the incense of the spring.

And there, intent to waste the livelong hour,
Thy sorrows shall bedew my honour'd urn:
Dead to each other love's obtrusive power;
Sadness thy choice, thy pleasure still to mourn.

—Oh envied lot, when love sincere as thine,
Shall blunt the edge of fate's severe decree:
Life's fickle joys, I'll pleasingly resign,
And bless the pang that sets my spirit free:

Not that around my pile, profusely shed
Arabia's gums my ashes may inhale;
Nor rich perfumes their curling incense spread
In cloudy odours, on the scented gale;

Not that, impervious to the shaft of time,
My tomb its monumental front may raise,
And towering from its sculptur'd base sublime,
Give to the stars my wide extended praise:

But that in every breeze that flutters by,
My exulting shade thy mournful voice may hear:
Catch the soft sound of every breathing sigh,
And mark the lustre of each falling tear.

The PISCATORY ECLOGUES of Sannazarius, if we may credit P. Jovius, contributed more to the establishment of his reputation than any other of his poetical productions, not even excepting that which cost him the labour of twenty years. Sannazarius boasts of being the first to attempt this species of eclogue, in which he has since been followed by Grotius and others:

See also Harris's Philological Enquiries, Part iii. p. 473. Lond. 1781, 8vo.

"Littoream ne despice Musam
Quam tibi post silvas, post horrida lustra Lycæi,
(Si quid id est) salsas deduxi (*k*) primus ad undas,
Ausus inexpertâ tentare pericula cymbâ."

Eclog. iv. Ferdinando Calabriæ duci.

Indeed his Latin poems in general are written with great classical elegance and purity. His well known epigram "De mirabili urbe Venetiis," of six lines, is said to have procured him from the senate of Venice a reward of so many hundred gold crowns. (*l*)

(*k*) Giacomo Sannazar che alle Camene
Lasciar fa i monti, ed abitar le arene.
(Ariost. Orland. Fur. Canto. ult.)

Grævius allows to Sannazarius the merit of inventing this species of eclogue; and says, he assumed the surname of "Actius" from the word "acta." *(Notes to Sannaz. Lib. iii. Ecl. 2. Amstel.* 1689, 12mo.*)*

(*l*) M. de la Monnoye *(notes to Baillet, "Jugemens des Savans," tom. i. p. 563,)* expresses a doubt of the truth of

VIDERAT Hadriacis VENETAM Neptunus in undis
Stare URBEM, et toto ponere jura mari:
Nunc mihi Tarpeias quantumvis Juppiter arces
Objice, et illa tui mœnia Martis ait:
Si Pelago Tybrim præfers—urbem aspice utramque,
ILLAM homines dices—HANC posuisse deos.

Several of the epigrams of Sannazarius are of the most caustic kind, particularly those which have relation to the vices or frailties of the successors of St. Peter. In that however which is addressed to their historian Platina, there is a happy playfulness which may justify the insertion of it.

AD BARTHOLEMÆUM PLATINAM. (*m*)

INGENIA et mores, vitasque obitusque notâsse
Pontificum, argutæ lex fuit historiæ:

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this circumstance: "Ce qu'on dit du présent dont l'honora la République de Venise, semble n' être fondé que sur la tradition. Je n'en trouve nulle preuve authentique dans la vie du Poëte, quoiqu' écrite asses au long par Jean Baptiste Cripso de Gallipoli. Tout le témoignage qu' il en rend est conçu en ces termes:" "Mi afferma il Signore Aldo Manucci (c'est Alde le jeune, fils de Paul) che la Republica di Venetia diede cento scudi al Sannazaro per ciascun verso dell' Epigramma "Viderat Hadriacis, &c."

(*m*) To BARTHOLEMÆUS PLATINA the republic of letters is indebted for the lives of the Roman pontiffs: a work, says P. Jovius which recommends itself by an air of veracity and an unaffected and simple style, and throws considerable light on some of the darkest periods of history. Among other works of Platina are "Dialogi de Vero Bono;" "Veràque Voluptate;" "De Optimo Cive," and "Libri de Honestâ Voluptate." Poor and destitute, and without any other recommendation than those parts and that genius which nature had bestowed, he came from Cremona to

Tu tamen hinc lautæ tractas pulmenta culinæ :
Hoc, PLATINA ! est ipsos pascere Pontifices.

EACH Pontiff's talents, morals, life and end,
To scan severe, your earlier labours tend—

Rome, in the pontificate of Calixtus III. where his talents as they developed themselves recommended him to preferment. " Cognitum Pius II. et Bessarion erudito judicio sacerdotiis minoribus exornárunt." Paul II. made him the object of a malignant and cruel persecution. (See his own account of his sufferings in his life of that pontiff.) Pope Sixtus IV. appointed him superintendant of the Vatican library, an office which he retained till his death, which took place at an advanced age.

" Quirinalem domum cum Laureto ad coronandos Poetas Pomponio relinquens" (says Jovius) " funus in Exquilias ad Mariæ majoris templum usque perductum est, flebili carmine celebrantibus poetis." His scholar Demetrius is said to have composed for him the following epitaph :

" Quisquis es (si pius) Platinam
Et suos ne vexes : angustè
Jacent, et soli volunt esse."

Grævius *(notes to Sannazarius, Epigr. Lib.* i. *Ep.* 31.*)* deems it strange that the author of the lives of the Roman pontiffs could condescend so far as to write a treatise on the culinary art (nam hujus argumenti, says he, sunt libri " de Honestâ Voluptate") and thinks him justly made the subject of the raillery of Sannazarius in the epigram here adduced.

Menage however asserts upon the authority of a letter of Platina himself inserted amongst those of the cardinal of Pavia, that Sannazarius by insinuating in the epigram abovecited, that the treatise " De Honestâ Voluptate" was composed subsequently to the work " De Vitis Pontificum," became the author of an error into which his commentators by too implicit confidence have fallen : the treatise on the culinary art having in reality been composed before its author's imprisonment and persecution by Paul II. whereas the historical work of Platina, as it appears from the epistle dedicatory, was undertaken in the pontificate and at the instance of Sixtus IV. the successor of Paul II. *(Vide Menagiana : tom* i. *pag.* 70. *a París,* 1729, *in* 12mo.*)*

When late—on culinary themes you shine,
Even pamper'd Pontiffs praise the kind design.

On the excellence of the Italian compositions of Sannazarius it would be superfluous to enlarge. He is confessedly one of the most polished and elegant writers of Tuscan poesy: and as Tiraboschi has justly observed, his poetical renown was the more estimable because participated by so few in his own age. Of all his vernacular productions none contributed more to perpetuate his fame than the "ARCADIA," which even after the lapse of several centuries, continued to be read with undiminished admiration. The "Sestine" indeed, a species of verse in which continual changes are rung in every stanza upon the same terminating words, have to an ultramontane reader at least a singular appearance. There is something in compositions of this kind too laboured and artificial to be consistent with the unaffected ease and simplicity which should particularly distinguish pastoral poetry. Of these "Sestine" several specimens of which occur in the Arcadia, Sannazarius was not the inventor. They frequently present themselves among the poems of Petrarch; whence they are sometimes termed "Sestine Petrarchesche:" though Bembus seems to refer the invention of them to the Provenzal writers. That taste must be pronounced false and corrupt, which would estimate the beauty and value of a work by the difficulty of its structure. Sannazarius has however given to this complicated species of versification all the perfection and grace of which it can be imagined susceptible. "L' eleganza dello stile" (says

Storia della Poesia Italiana vol. iii. p. 1. ripubblicata da T. J. Mathias. Londra, 1803, 8vo.

Le Prose del Bembo, Lib. ii. p. 70. Fiorenza, 1548, in 4to.

Tiraboschi ut supra, p. 145.

Tiraboschi,) "la proprietà e la sceltezza dell' espressioni, le descrizioni, le immagini, gli affetti, tutto è, si può dire, nuovo e originale nell' Arcadia."

The tomb of Sannazarius continues to be an interesting object of curiosity even to travellers of modern times. Mabillon and Germain, two learned Benedictines of the seventeenth century, make mention of it to the following purport. This exquisite piece of sculpture is to be seen at Posilipo in the villa Mergillina, which Sannazarius in his life time converted into a church, and dedicated to the virgin mother and S. Nazaro. Behind the high altar rises the mausoleum of the poet, formed of Parian marble, with a half-length likeness of him on the top, crowned with a wreath of laurel. Beneath stand on the right and left two marble statues of Minerva and Apollo, while Satyrs are seen sporting in the middle. Posterity ashamed perhaps, as well they might, of such a profanation even of the holy altar, fondly imagined they could throw a veil over it by inscribing the base of Apollo's statue with the name of David, and Minerva's with that of Judith, but (add the good fathers,) "his coloribus non luditur Deus." On the lower part appears the well known epitaph by Bembus:

Vide Museum Italicum, tom. i. p. 112, in 4to. Luteciæ Paris, 1687.

DA. SACRO. CINERI. FLORES. HIC. ILLE. MARONI.
SINCERUS. MUSA. PROXIMUS. UT. TUMULO.

Benedetto Menzini has also erected a poetical monument to the memory of Sannazarius, in the design of which he has indulged his own fancy. It consists of the following lines:

Vide Crescimbeni Della Poesia Ital. ripubblicat. da T. J. Mathias, vol. ii. p. 211. Londr. 1803, 8vo.

Tomba del gran Sincero. Almi pastori
Volgete a questa reverente il piede;
Raro si scorse, e raro oggi si vede
Chi splenda altier di sì sublime onori.
Scolti nel marmo i mirti e i sacri allori
Della cetra Febea diconlo erede;
E loro in mezzo, come Dea risiede
Partenope che sparge e frondi e fiori.
Mirate dall' un fianco in su l' arene
Le reti, e lungi una barchetta appare;
Stan dall' altro sampogne e argute avene.
Ninfe de' boschi, e voi dell onde chiare
Qual mai vide pastor Roma od Atene,
Ch' empia del nome suo la terra e 'l mare.

Here Azzio's tomb its storied front displays:
With reverence swains! the deathless marble view:
To genius, that affects no common praise
Here emulous sculpture rears the trophies due.
For him who shar'd Apollo's tuneful powers,
Myrtles and bays appropriate honours twine;
The midst Parthenope! thy form divine
Presiding, scatters ever-greens and flowers.
Lo! there the net extended on the sand:
Apart the light bark stems the foamy spray:
Thick waves in tuneful guise yon reedy strand.
Nymphs of the woods—and ye of ocean, say
Like him, of Greece or Latium's pastoral band
Who bore in song your mutual palm away?

CANZONE DI SANNAZZARO.

Sperai gran tempo (e le mie Dive il sanno
Che fur mia scorta a l' amoroso passo)
Quel mio dir frale e basso
Alzar cantando in più lodato stile.
Or m' è già presso il quartodecim' anno
De' miei martir', che 'n questo viver, lasso,
Mi ritien privo e casso
Di libertà quel bel viso gentile;
Nè posso ancor lo 'ngegno oscuro e vile
Dal visco ove a tutt' ore Amor lo 'ntrica,
Per industria o fatica
Liberar sì, che alquanto si rileve.
Onde la mente che di viver brama,
Veggendo il tempo breve,
Non ardisce sperar più eterna fama.
Qual pregio, lasso, il cieco mondo errante
Vide mai tal, che questo agguagliar possa?
Lasciar la carne e l' ossa
Sepolte in terra, e 'l nome alzarsi a volo?
O vigilie, o fatiche oneste e sante!
Rimarrò io pur chiuso in poca fossa,
Nè fia mai tolta o scossa
Di tal paura l' alma, o di tal duolo?
Se le vostr' acque, o Muse, adoro e colo,
Se i vostri boschi con piacer frequento:
Se di voi sol contento,
Dispregio quel che più la turba estima:
Non mi lasciate, prego, in preda a morte;
Che dal cantar mio prima
Mi prometteste già più lieta sorte.
Basti fin qui le pene e i duri affanni
In tante carte, e le mie gravi some
Aver mostrate: e come

Amor i suoi seguaci al fin governa:
Or mi vorrei levar con altri vanni
Per potermi di lauro ornar le chiome,
E con più saldo nome
Lassar di me qua giù memoria eterna:
Ma il dolor che ne l' anima s' interna,
La confonde per forza, e volge altrove:
Tal che con mille prove
Far non poss'io che di se stessa pensi,
Nè che ritorni al suo vero cammino:
Misera! che fra i sensi
Sommersa già, non vede il suo destino.
Non vede il ciel, che con benigni aspetti,
Per farla gloriosa ed immortale,
Le avea dato con l' ale
Materia da potersi alzar di terra:
Mostrando a nostra età chiari e perfetti
Animi a cui già mai non calse o cale
Se non di pregio eguale
A lor virtù sempr' una in pace e 'n guerra.
Lasso, chi mi tien qui, che non mi sferra?
Che avendo di parlar sì largo campo,
Del desir tutto avvampo,
Sol per mostrar a chi m' incende e strugge,
Che senza dir de gli occhj o del bel velo,
O di lei che mi fugge,
Si può con altra gloria andare in cielo.
Così quel che cantò del gran Pelide,
Del forte Ajace, e poi del saggio Ulisse,
E quell' altro che scrisse
L' arme e gli affanni del figliuol d' Anchise,
Più chiari son di quei che 'l mondo vide
Pianger di e notte l' amorose risse:
Che tal legge prescrisse
Natura a chi ad Amor virtù sommise.
Beati Spirti, a cui per fatto arrise
Sì lieto il ciel, che dal terreno manto

Con lor soave canto
Si alzar' sopra quest' aere oscuro e fosco.
Che se viver qua giù tanto m' aggrada
Errando in questo bosco;
Che fia salir per la superna strada!
Benigno Apollo, ch' a quel sacro fronte
Ch' inonda il felicissimo Elicona,
La' ve a tutt' or risuona
La lira tua, ti stai soavemente;
Potrò dir io con rime argute e pronte
Il bel principio altero, e la corona
Vittrice onde Aragona
Sparse l' imperio suo per ogni gente?
O dirò sol di quello a chi il Ponente
Parendo angusto, il braccio infin qui stese?
Ed a mill' altre imprese
Italia aggiunse? ove con vivi esempi
Lasciò poi sì famoso e degno erede,
Ch' adorna i nostri tempi
Con le rare virtù ch' in se possiede.
Alma gentil, che tutte l' altre vinci,
(Se tanto a' versi miei prometter lice)
Il tuo nome felice
Lete non sentrà mai ne le mie carte;
Nè tacerò, se pur fia ch' io cominci,
I bei rami ch' uscir' di tal radice;
L' una e l' altra Fenice
Che per te spandon l' ale in ogni parte:
Questa, ch' Italia ornando col suo Marte,
Guarda col becco il proprio e l' altrui nido:
Quella che con un grido
Su la riva del Reno, e poi su l' acque
Di Nettunno disperse ogni altro augello:
Che così al cielo piacque
Per far più il secol nostro adorno e bello.
Indi s' avvien che al viver frale e manco
Non lenti il corso il mio debile ingegno,

Ma con vittoria al segno
Pur giunga; sì com' io bramando spero;
Pria che dal fascio faticato e stanco
Si parta, e lasse il suo corporeo regno;
(Benchè frale ed indegno)
Si sforzerà con stil grave e severo
Sacrar cantando un altro spirto altero,
Ch' oggi orna il mondo sol con sua beltade;
Ma la futura etade
Con gesti illustrerà, per quanto or veggio;
Ai quali il ciel riserbe i giorni miei,
Che 'l veda in alto seggio
Carco tornar di spoglie e di trofei.
Canzon, tu vedi ben che 'l gran desio
Di sì breve parlar non riman sazio;
Ove maggiore ispazio
Alma vorrebbe più tranquilla e lieta.
Ma se pur fia ch' Amor non mi distempre,
Vedrai col suo Poeta
Napol bella levarsi, e viver sempre.

Muses! though long by you inspir'd,
Of amorous themes alone I sing,
The fond hope once this bosom fir'd
To strike at length a loftier string—
Yet years twice seven I pine in vain
A martyr to my unpitied pain;
By her in adamantine fetters bound,
From whose bright eyes my heart receiv'd its wound.

The indignant slave of Beauty's power,
In vain my aspiring genius, free

To more exalted heights would soar;
And chaunt the strains of liberty:
Alas! for deathless praise I sigh,
Yet swift the auspicious moments fly;
Nor longer hopes your captive bard to claim,
While LOVE forbids, the immortal wreath of fame.

O! happy they—to whom 'tis given
The invidious shaft of death to brave;
Who favour'd of indulgent heaven,
Can burst the barriers of the grave;
Live in their sacred vigils,—spurn
The mortal coil,—the silent urn;
And leaving earth and frailty far behind,
Assert the illimitable powers of mind.

Blest NINE! if your dear founts, your bowers
My fond steps haunt,—if still with you
I joy to pass my innoxious hours,
Nor aught the crowd esteems—pursue,
O save your votary from the doom
Oblivious, and the unhonour'd tomb;
Confirm the pledge (unpractis'd to deceive)
The auspicious pledge your early favour gave.

Suffice it LOVE! my abject strains
Thus long thy proud caprice obey,
And sing the tortures, griefs, and chains
They prove, who cringe to Beauty's sway.
Fain would my freed Muse upward spring,
And soar on more adventurous wing,
Win for this brow, of ever verdant bays
The wreath, and live immortal in her lays.

Yet, yet I feel thy maddening pain
  Inflame—and rankle at my heart,—
Drive me, at passion's gust insane,
  Unmindful of each worthier part.
In vain across my wilder'd way,
Conviction throws her friendly ray,
Reason in vain exerts her voice severe,
And points my erring steps to Fame's career.

Auspicious on my natal morn
  If Song's bright star its radiance shed,
Bade me, with conscious vigour—born
  For noblest flights—my pinions spread;
And emulous, reach with equal praise
Your deeds, blest chiefs of modern days,
Exalted spirits, whom no middle claim
Contents, in war and peace your praise supreme;

What force alas! what magic chain,
  When acts like yours my bosom fire,
The Muse's struggling wings restrain?
  Why but for her resounds my lyre,
Whose charms resistless caus'd my pain?
Who wings her glances with disdain;
And whilst averse his amorous suit she flies,
Defrauds the bard of glory's ardent prize.

So he—PELIDES' ire who sings,
  Brave AJAX—and ULYSSES sage,
Or who for thee, his rapt lyre strings,
  Troy's toilsome CHIEF! thro' every age
Renown'd shall live; when time consigns
To dust the lover's nerveless lines
Indignant: such the destiny he woos,
Who prostitutes to LOVE the ingenuous Muse.

Blest bards! who pour'd your dulcet notes,
Impeded by no mists terrene,
Where pure, yon liquid azure floats,
O'er-arching high this shadowy scene:
Oh! if below the charms of song,
These darksome bowers, these groves among,
Can please—what bliss! to trill the tuneful lay,
Thro' heav'ns blue vault; and cleave the ethereal way.

Thou, to whose harp that favour'd hill
Re-echoes—where thro' blissful bowers
The Muse's fount its sparkling rill,
Fraught with exuberant verdure, pours:
Phœbus! deign thou the lyre, the string,
That high-born, sceptred race I'll sing,
From ARAGON begun—whose martial sway
Pour'd o'er the nations its resistless way:

Or HIM whom ample realms possest
Urg'd but to seek a wider reign:
Who stretch'd his bold arm o'er the west,
To grasp Italia's fair domain:
Chief of emprize untold:—nor shine
Less bright his glories PRINCE! in thine,
Heir of his fame—whose undiminish'd praise,
Sheds equal lustre on our wond'ring days.

MONARCH rever'd! thy praise shall soar,
If aught aright the Muse divine,
Lasting, beyond each chief's of yore,
In some auspicious strains of mine:
Nor shall my fond lyre sleep unstrung,
E'er thy lov'd PROGENY be sung;
On equal plume, lo! each, a phœnix springs,
And hov'ring, widely spreads his guardian wings.

With threat'ning beak—this pois'd on high,
His own and brother's nest defends:
That uttering loud his fear-fraught cry,
O'er Rhine's far shores his wing suspends;
And wide, athwart old Neptune's sway,
Urges each direful bird of prey.
Such are the gifts, by fav'ring heav'n supplied,
At once our age's ornaments and pride.

Hence, if on pinions weak and frail
The Muse her arduous flight can steer,
Nor of the bright goal drooping fail,
That onward tempts her fond career:
Ere weary of her pleasing toils,
She yield to fate these mortal spoils;
However feeble, one delightful theme
Her parting energies of song shall claim.

CHILD of exalted hope, whose bloom
Beams on our gaze a proud presage:
Whose deeds, if right the bard presume,
Shall soon adorn a wond'ring age:
Fain would I this frail life prolong,
To consecrate with deathless song
Thy loud acclaim—what time the trophied car
Bears thee sublime amid the pomp of war.

Too weak my SONG thy niggard flight,
To reach the poet's vast desire,
Yet, if some happier hour invite,
Thou may'st on bolder wings aspire:
Oh! might this agitated breast
From LOVE's perturbing conflict rest,
NAPLES! thy BARD should seize the laureate crown,
And thou eternal share his bright renown.

MEMOIRS

OF

BEMBUS.

TE QUOQUE PIERIOS FAMA EST POTASSE LIQUORES,
ET VIDISSE DEAS QUIBUS EST CUSTODIA SACRI
FONTIS, ET EUROTÆ CAMPOS, AC PHOCIDIS ARVA;
IPSE UBI FRONDE SUA TIBI TEMPORA CINXIT APOLLO,
DONA DEDIT, CITHARAM, NERVOS, ET EBURNEA
PLECTRA.

BAPTISTA MANTUANUS.

AMONG the Italians who cultivated polite literature, and the muses, about the end of the fifteenth, and the commencement of the sixteenth centuries, PIETRO BEMBO holds a conspicuous place. He was born at Venice, A. D. 1470. His family was one of the most ancient and honourable of the republic, and among those in whom the patrician or senatorial dignity was hereditary.

His father Bernardo, an accomplished scholar, and a distinguished statesman, (*a*) being sent by his countrymen on an embassy to Florence, carried with him young Pietro, then only eight years of age; with a view to improve him in the orthography and pronunciation of the Italian language; which was supposed to be there written and spoken in its greatest purity. It was on occasion of this embassy, that Politian addressed the following complimentary verses to the father of Pietro; which are calculated to give us a high idea of his eloquence, and fitness for the character of an ambassador.

Vide Poemata Politiani.

(*a*) "Doctoratûs laureâ, equestri gradu, et senatorio ordine, insignis fuit. Plura scripsit, quamvis paucissima typis vulgata sint." *(Zeno.)* The father of Pietro, maintained a friendly intercourse with many illustrious and learned persons of the age; and is honourably spoken of by various writers. Frequent mention of him occurs in the letters of Marsilius Ficinus, and that in the highest terms of commendation. He discharged many of the most honourable offices of the state, at home and abroad. Paulus Jovius informs us, that he had the merit of restoring and beautifying Dante's tomb at Ravenna, and of doing honour to his remains by a new epitaph. "Tumulum vetustate collabentem, Bernardus Bembus Petri Bembi Cardinalis Pater, in eâ urbe prætor, opere cœlato et concamerato additoque hoc epigrammate luculenter exornavit."

"Exiguâ tumuli DANTHES! hìc sorte jacebas
Squallenti nulli cognite penè situ,
At nunc marmoreo subnixus conderis arcu,
Omnibus et cultu splendidiore nites.
Nimirum Bembus, Musis incensus Ethruscis
Hoc tibi, quem imprimis hæ coluêre, dedit."

Bernardo Bembo died A. D. 1518, in his eighty-sixth year. *(See the notes of Apost. Zeno to Casa's life of Bembus: also the letters of Ficinus.)*

BERNARDO BEMBO, VENETO ORATORI,
VIRO UNDECUNQUE ELEGANTISSIMO.

Ut miseros quondam nautas, Achelöia Siren
In pœnam traxit carmine blandisono:
Sic Bernarde, tuo quemvis succendis amore,
Seu quid mente agitas, seu geris, aut loqueris.
Si causam Veneti tutaris Bembe, senatûs,
Mox Pitho in labris stat veneranda tuis:
Seria si tractas, credam tractare Minervam:
Si joca, dat puros Gratia nuda sales.
Carmina seu cantas, tibi Musæ in pectore cantant:
Sive taces, tacito ridet in ore lepos.
Si graderis, placido non dura modestia vultu
Est comes, et dulcis cum gravitate modus.
Blandus honos vestem furtim componit, ovansque
Te circum, plenâ ludit Amor pharetrâ:
Fronte decor, sedet ore fides, in pectore candor,
Inque tuis omnes sunt oculis veneres.
Sic nos devincis, nec vinctos Bembe relaxas;
Sic te quisquis adit, mox tua philtra bibit.
Frustra ad te, florem Cylleni ferret Ulysses;
Sed pro te optâsset linquere vel patriam.

Hail matchless orator, whose tuneful tongue
Can fascinate, as erst the Syren's song;
Whose bland address, and eloquence refin'd,
Achieve each purpose of thy pregnant mind.
Venetia's advocate, thy patriot zeal
Pleads energetic, and ensures her weal.
Now grave, thy subject wisdom's self sustains,
Now chasten'd wit thy brilliant fancy reins.
—Nor less, if versatile, thou sweep the lyre,
Their favour'd poet all the Muses fire.

—Thine too, the silent qualities that please,
The smile complacent, and the courtly ease,—
The dignity that awes, but not alarms,
And nameless grace that adds a thousand charms;
While hovering near thee on exulting wings,
The Paphian pow'r his light artillery flings:
Pleas'd with that manly front, that aspect kind,
And tongue that indicates the ingenuous mind.
—'Tis thus, that BEMBUS every heart enchains;
'Tis thus his magic influence he retains.
Vain were thy herbs, Cyllenius, to repel
Charms such as these,—or counteract his spell.—
For him, Ulysses too might wish to leave
His realm belov'd, and stem the billowy wave.

At this time, the Florentine republic was governed by the illustrious Lorenzo de' Medici: who merited the appellation of Magnificent, and was the patron of learning and the fine arts. His unbounded liberality, and avowed love of the sciences, had rendered his court the resort of the learned from every quarter; so that young Bembus could not have been placed in a more advantageous school for the formation of his taste.

Having one day accompanied his father on an excursion of pleasure, to a villa in the vicinity of Florence, his attention was strongly attracted by a milk-white steed, which happened to pass along the highway, richly caparisoned, and led by a groom: being intended as a present from a person of distinction in Lombardy, to Lorenzo. Young Pietro, captivated by its singular beauty, could not help forming an ardent wish to be possessed of this fine animal. On their return to the city, the horse together with its rich furni-

ture, was to their great surprize, sent to the ambassador by Lorenzo; with a request that he would accept of it for his son's use.

The business of Bernardo's embassy being accomplished, and the two years allotted for his stay at Florence expired; young Bembo returned home with his father, and was placed under the tuition of Joannes Alexander Urticius. He continued for a series of years to apply with great assiduity to his studies; and especially to improve his acquaintance with the Latin tongue, by the perusal of the purest Roman authors. He had attained his eighteenth year, when his father being sent by the republic on a new embassy to Rome, to Pope Innocent VIII.; confided to him among other domestic concerns of importance, the management of a suit in which he then happened to be engaged. Pietro, in the course of his sedulous attendance at the courts of judicature on this occasion, was by a sudden provocation involved in an affray with Giusto Goro, a young person of rank, the nephew of his father's opponent; and received a wound that had nearly occasioned the loss of the fore-finger of his right hand, the perfect use of which he is said never to have recovered. (*b*)

(*b*) Beccatelli, who seems pleased with an opportunity of relating any thing that borders upon the marvellous, further adds: "It is remarkable, and I have heard Pietro himself declare, that his mother Madonna Helena, the same morning before he went out, had entreated him not to go to the Rialto, (where this rencontre happened) nor to have any conversation with Giusto Goro; she having dreamed the preceding night, that the latter had wounded him on the hand with a *storta* or sabre." "For heaven's sake, my son" (said she) "be upon your guard, my dreams are generally prophetic,"

After his father's return to Venice, solicitous to acquire a perfect knowledge of the Greek language, of which at this time Italy could boast few native professors of eminence, he resolved to undertake a voyage to Messina, in order to avail himself of the instructions of Constantinus Lascaris. (*c*) He set out on this expedition A. D. 1492, accompanied by Agnolo Gabrielli, a young Venetian of distinction, his friend and fellow student. They directed their course to Naples, intending to

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" di gratia figliolo guardati, che non soglio sognare indarno." But this it seems was by no means the only event which this good matron had predicted. " Credo" (says Beccatelli) " governata per la sua bontà da qualche Angelo benigno sicome ancho con la gratia di Dio havea generato un figliolo tanto eccellente." *(Vita di P. Bembo prefixed to vol.* ii. *degli Istorici delle cose Veneziane in* 4to. *Venez.* 1718.*)*

Bembus has himself given an account of this misadventure in a letter to Giuliano de' Medici. *(Oper. Vol.* iii. *Lib.* 2. *In Venez.* 1729, *fol.)*

(*c*) Constantinus Lascaris was a Greek refugee of high birth, who amongst others, fled from his native country when Constantinople was taken by the Turks. He taught the Greek language with great celebrity, first at Milan, till the year 1463, or later; afterwards at Messina; where he died towards the end of the same century. *(Vide Hodium de Græcis Illustribus.)* Bembus, in a letter to Urticius, terms him " non modò Græcum, sed etiam Byzantinum, quæ quidem urbs sola" (says he) " ex universâ Græciâ, retinere probitatem illam Atticam antiqui sermonis, . . . plane dicitur." The Greek Grammar of Constant. Lascaris, with a Latin interpretation per Johan. Monachum Placentinum, published *Mediolani,* in fol. 1480, " prima est græcolatina prælorum fœtura," says Apost. Zeno. *(Notes to Casa's Life of Bembo,)* An edition of the same work published by Aldus, *Venetiis,* 1495, from a copy corrected by the author, and with which the printer was furnished by Bembo and Gabrielli, was the first essay of the Aldine press.

embark there for the place of their ultimate destination. Accordingly, writing afterwards to his father, he says, "Having met with a small vessel we set sail, and on the tenth day arrived at Sicily, not a little sea-sick; but our indisposition was soon dissipated by the humane attentions of Constantinus Lascaris, who received us with the kindest welcome, and those liberal assurances which his conduct already begins to realise. He instructs us with unwearied diligence, and a tenderness almost paternal. Nothing can be at once more benign and more dignified than the conduct of this truly venerable old man. We are accommodated in all respects agreeably to our wishes." Familiar. Ep. Lib. i. ep. 9.

Bembus continued in Sicily more than two years, and there composed a work in the Latin language, "DE ÆTNÆ INCENDIIS:" (*d*) the first publication we are informed which issued from the Aldine press "in literis rotundis." M. Baillet concluding him to have been very young when he composed this work, has enumerated him among his "Enfans Cèlèbres;" but Apostolus Zenus proves, that he was then in his twenty-fifth year. Of the work in question, he is said to have disapproved in his maturer years. Not. ad Casæ vitam P. Bembi.

The compositions of Bembus, both in the Latin and Italian languages, soon began to extend his reputation, not only through the

(*d*) "Petri Bembi de Ætnâ ad Angelum Chabrielem liber." *(Impress. Venetiis in ædibus Aldi Romani, mense Februario. Anno* M.V.D. *in* 4to.*)* It was written at Messina, and published the same year in which he returned. *(Zenus.)*

different states of Italy, but also to distant countries. The public admiration was more especially excited by the circumstance of his excelling both in prose and poetical composition: qualifications seldom found united in the same person. His father marked with pleasure his promising talents and acquirements; and began to express his desire that he should render them more actively serviceable to his country by accepting some public charge. But young Bembus felt little inclination to exchange the soft converse and secluded retreats of the muses, for the cabals of intrigue and the declamation of the forum. From motives however of pure obedience to paternal authority, he reluctantly came forward in public, and occasionally pleaded as an advocate with success and applause. But his expectation of obtaining a particular office in the republic being frustrated by the election of a rival candidate, much inferior to him in talents and merit, he retired from public scenes with increased aversion. His father he observed, had other sons, to whom a political career might not be disagreeable; and who treading in the footsteps of their illustrious progenitors, might serve the republic as generals or statesmen with credit and advantage. His ambition, not less honourable in itself, was of such a nature that it might be gratified without having recourse to humiliating submissions, against which his mind revolted; and the rewards which he aimed at depended not on the ill-judging caprice of the multitude in one state or city, but on the decision of the wise and intelligent of all nations; nor had respect to the transient opinion of the present day, but to that of every succeeding age.

In the midst of this conflict between his own inclination, and the respect due to the advice and solicitations of his friends, whilst Bembus was revolving this subject in his mind, we are told that he chanced to enter a certain church, at the instant when the officiating priest reading a portion of the evangelical history, pronounced these words, "Petre sequere me:" "Peter follow me." Struck with this coincidence, which he considered as a divine admonition specially intended for the resolution of his doubts: his biographer informs us, he no longer hesitated respecting the course of life which he should pursue. If we ought to credit this adventure, it will not be easy to reconcile Bembo's reasoning upon it, with the habit of thinking manifested in some of his earlier writings, which betray a levity, and indeed licentiousness, ill according with a religious turn of mind. But perhaps the human character is capable of combining the most remote extremes, and the same person may be at once dissipated and superstitious.

Vit. di P. Bembo by Beccatelli.

After the lapse of a few years, which he spent partly at Venice and partly at Padua, in the prosecution of his studies; Bernardo Bembo was appointed *Vicedomino* of Ferrara. (*e*) Pietro accompanied his father to that city;

(*e*) "Degnità instituta dappoi una vittoria navale, avuta in Pò da Viniziani contra i Duchi di Ferrara: nella quale per l' altri leggi che fur loro da vincitori imposte, era che un gentiluomo Viniziano a vicenda dal Senato eletto, andasse a Ferrara, quasi compagno del Duca, a governar la citta." *(Life of Bembo prefixed to the edition of his works. In Venez. 1729, in 4 tom. fol.)*

where he had an opportunity of attending the philosophical lectures of Nicolao Leoniceno. Here also he commenced a strict intimacy with Giacomo Sadoleto, and several other learned men. He acquired indeed the affections of all the illustrious youth of Ferrara; and particularly recommended himself to the esteem of the nobility; of Ercole d' Este, the reigning duke; Alfonso, his son and successor; and Lucrezia Borgia, the consort of Alfonso. But amidst the splendours of a court, and the blandishments of festivity, Pietro still found leisure to pursue his studies. When about twenty-eight years of age he began his "ASOLANI:" (*f*) so intituled from its having been finished at Asolo; a town of no inconsiderable importance in the Venetian territory. This work, wherein the subject of love is treated of in a moral and philosophical point of view, was considered as a perfect model of style and composition; and read with avidity throughout all Italy, by those of either sex who had any pretensions to taste or politeness. (*g*)

After this honourable sojourn at Ferrara,

(*f*) "Prodiit primùm Venetiis, ex ædibus Aldi Romani, anno M.D.V. mense martio: in 4to. Sæpiùs deinde editum." *(Zenus.)*

(*g*) "—— Compose i suoi Asolani; la qual opra da tutta Italia con molto desiderio fu veduta & letta; & da quella cominciorono i svegliati ingegni a considerare che cosa fusse regolatamente scrivere, e far rime veramente Toscane, che prima si facevano a caso, ne era per letterato & gentile stimato chi detti libri letti non havesse." *(Vita di Pietr. Bembo, scr. da Lod. Beccatelli Arcivescovo di Ragusi: ut supra.)*

Pietro again returned with his father to Venice; where, and at Padua, he continued his literary lucubrations, inflamed with an ardent desire of improving his native language. At length, unwilling to continue burthensome to his father, whose means of supporting a splendid establishment were not proportioned to his rank, he resolved to try the effect of a change of situation on his own fortunes; and after some deliberation fixed upon the court of Urbino for that purpose. At this time, under the auspices of Guido-Ubaldo of Montefeltro, duke of Urbino, and especially of his accomplished consort, the lady Helisabetta Gonzaga, that court had become the centre of genius, fashion and taste. (*h*) Here all distinguished

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(*h*) It is in the court of Urbino that Baltassar Castiglioni lays the scene of his conversations in his celebrated work, entitled "Ill Cortegiano," and Bembo is introduced as one of the speakers. This highly pleasing work, which it is said the Italians term "Il libro d' oro," has been characterised as always new, always interesting and instructive; notwithstanding the changes which time makes in customs and manners. The work derives additional interest from this circumstance: that the speakers introduced in it, are actually the same eminent and illustrious persons who frequented this court at the period we are speaking of. Accordingly, Apostolo Zeno enumerates them from Castiglioni's narrative. "Aderant nobile Fregosiorum par, Federicus qui postea Salernitanus archiepiscopus; ac Octavianus qui Genuensium dux creatus fuit: comes Ludovicus Canossa, mox Bajorensis episcopus: Bernardus Divitius a Bibiena, qui tituli sanctæ Mariæ in porticu Cardinalis est renunciatus: Julianus Medices, cognomento Magnificus, Nemursii dux: comes Balthassar Castilionæus, qui oblatum Abulensem in Hispaniâ episcopatum recusavit: Cæsar Gonzaga, Gaspar Pallavicinus: alii multi de quibus mentionem infert Castilionæus." &c. *(Zeni in vit. Bemb. Not.)* Castiglioni, who terms his work (Il Cortegiano) "come un ritratto di pittura della Corte d' Urbino," himself frequented the same court, and

for any excellency, found not only an hospitable, but splendid welcome. So agreeable and attractive was the society at Urbina, that Bembus from the time of his introduction there, about the year 1506, was frequently to be found at this seat of polite and elegant festivity. Nor was he less admired than any of the most dignified and accomplished strangers that visited Urbino. He is indeed said to have possessed in a high degree, all those personal and mental accomplishments which tend to conciliate esteem. To a tall, manly, and elegantly formed person, he added an insinuating and engaging address, a captivating eloquence, and a genteel and polished easiness of manners, which never failed to make an impression in his favour. Here likewise Pietro continued at intervals to prosecute his studies with unabating alacrity; the fruits of which were his "RIME," and various Latin compositions. (*i*) He also occasionally visited the

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was sent as the ambassador of Guido-Ubaldo to Rome; to the court of Louis XII. of France, and that of our own HenryVII. He died on his way to Spain on a like mission; having been nominated by the emperor, bishop of Avila. The birth of this accomplished poet and scholar happened in 1478, in the duchy of Mantua; his death at Toledo, in 1529.

Whilst resident at Urbino, Bembus received notice of the decease of his mother Helena, which happened November, 1509.

(*i*) He afterwards composed in the dialogue form his "De Guido Ubaldo Feretrio, deque Elisabethâ Gonzagia, Urbini Ducibus Liber," printed *Venetiis per Jo. Antonium ejusque fratres Sabios. anno.* 1530, *in* 4to. and *Romæ*, 1547. It was translated into Italian, and enriched with a learned preface by Nicolaus Mazzius Cortonensis; and printed *Typis Laur. Torrentini, Florentiæ anno* 1555, *in* 8vo. with

court of Rome, where the duchess zealously endeavoured to promote his interests. In the last year of the pontificate of Julius II. he accompanied Giacomo Sadoleto and other persons of distinction, to that city; where among other literary services rendered by him to the pope, he decyphered an ancient manuscript written in abbreviated characters: (*k*) a task which others had in vain attempted. This pontiff appears to have recompensed his services by presenting him with some preferments of an ecclesiastical nature. (*l*)

In consequence of the decease of Julius II. Giovanni de' Medici, who afterwards assumed the name of Leo X. was elected to the vacant dignity, March 5 or 11, 1513. Leo, soon after his elevation to the pontificate, influenced by the reputation of Bembo's talents

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the following title: "Vita dello Illustrissimo Sig. Guidobaldo Duca d' Urbino, e dell' Illustrissima Sig. Elizabetta Gonzaga sua consorte."

(*k*) "Papa Giulio al quale di Dacia era stato mandato un libro scritto a note, ch' alcuno interpretare saputo non havea, lo fece dare al Bembo . . . . M. Pietro quel libro espose et trovò la via d' intendere le note, che da gli antichi, et da Cicerone medesimo si dice che furono ritrovate per scrivere con poche righe assai." *(Beccatelli.)*

(*l*) "Lo provide della commenda di Bologna." *(Beccatelli.)* "Ebbe da Giulio II. il Bembo la commenda de' cavalieri Gerosolimitani di Pola, l' anno M.D.XIII. e però allora e vesti l' abito di quella Religione. Leon X. gli conferi primamente la commenda di Benevento; e di poi lo fece Gran Priore d' Ungheria." See a note to the life of Bembo by Beccatelli, who however informs us, that he declined the acceptance of *benefices with cure* before his elevation to the cardinalship.

and erudition, appointed him one of his secretaries. He settled at Rome in this character at the age of forty-three; and had for his colleague in office Giacomo Sadoleto, (*m*) with whom he had already formed a friendship at Ferrara. By these learned men the pope's correspondence was carried on in pure and classical Latin; a thing hitherto unusual, says Casa, and perhaps deemed impracticable. Bembus soon rendered himself of great importance to Leo X. who convinced of his uncommon abilities employed him in commissions of the highest trust. He admitted him to his intimate confidence, and enriched him by his liberality. "Riconnobbe," (says Beccatelli) "Papa Leone li suoi meriti accrescendoli la entrata di beni ecclesiastici sino a tre millia fiorini d' oro."

This pontiff, who was the second son of Lorenzo de' Medici, was created a cardinal by Innocent VIII. when very young. Leo was the pupil of Politian. (*n*) He is allowed to

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(*m*) SADOLETUS was created bishop of Carpentras, and afterwards cardinal, by Paul III. He is by all parties represented as a pious and enlightened character; and was one of those who wrote the purest Latin in the sixteenth century. His "CURTIUS," wherein he is allowed to have adorned a dignified subject with numbers equally chaste, spirited and harmonious, has entitled him to the character of an excellent poet. His prose works are various, and embrace a variety of subjects.

(*n*) Among the epistles of Politian may be found a letter of thanks, written by him to Innocent VIII. for his appointing Giovanni de' Medici, his pupil, to the cardinalship. In this letter he expatiates at considerable length and in terms of the highest commendation upon the good qualities and literary acquirements of young Giovanni, and the general joy and exultation occasioned at Florence, by his elevation to that high dignity.

have participated in the munificence and attachment to literature, for which the family of the Medici was eminently distinguished; and with a taste exquisitely refined, united the greatest splendour and magnificence. But he was excessively addicted to pleasurable and luxurious gratifications; and the court of Rome naturally falling in with the habits of its chief, is represented during his pontificate, as the seat of voluptuousness.

It is at this time that the moral conduct of Bembo appears to have been most exceptionable; the deterioration of which some attribute to the contagious air of this dissolute city. (*o*) He formed a connection with a

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(*o*) Vivere qui cupitis sanctè, discedite Româ;
Omnia cum LICEANT, non licet esse bonum.
(Bapt. Mantuanus.)

The author of the life of cardinal Bembo, prefixed to the complete edition of his works, published at Venice in 1729, in fol. turns apologist for him in the following extraordinary terms.

" Fu Papa Leone come se' detto Principe d' animo molto grande e liberalissimo, e di natura molto ingenuo, e senza alcuna superstizione ed' ippocrisia. E perche stimava le cose secondo l' essistenzia, e non secondo l' apparenzia, viveva da signore grande ed allegro con tutti que piaceri che la natura non aborrisce, e fanno il principato commodo e dilettevole. E perche la corte, ed' il popolo, come dice Platone, va dietro a' costumi del principe, si viveva nella sua corte molto magnificamente e molto liberamente, e sopra tutto senza ippocrisia, dove trovandosi M. Pietro Bembo, ed avendo accordato il suo gusto al gusto di quella corte, oltra che egli era di voglie molto graziose e molto facili ad amare non sara chi si maravigli se venutole vista una bella e vaga giovine che Moresina fu chiamata, di rare maniere e di leggiadri costumi, a lei rivolse l' animo e fattose la sua, tutto il tempo che ella visse con lei congiuntissimamente dimorò."

beautiful female, who was considered at once in the character of his mistress and his muse; and three sons (*p*) and a daughter were the fruits of this amour.

In vita P. Bembi.

Upon this part of Bembo's conduct, Casa enters with manifest reluctance. He endeavours to transfer the culpability from his friend to the indecorous laxity of manners common to the times; and adds as an additional palliative, that he was as yet "nullis sacris initiatus:" not in holy orders. In the biographers of Bembo we plainly discern the partiality of friends; but by some of the earlier reformed writers he is censured with a severity that seems founded rather in prejudice than in truth.

Several circumstances are recorded by the latter, which reflect much on Bembo's character, and that of Leo X. his master. (*q*)

Casa says this lady was very young when Bembus first became enamoured of her: "Ipso ætatis flore, sexdecim annos nata, Bembum in sui amorem pellexit." She lived after this twenty-two years, and died A. D. 1535.

(*p*) The premature death of one of these sons who is called Lucilius Bembus, we find our poet lamenting in the following lines.

O multùm dilecte puer—quæ dura parenti
Fortuna invidit te superesse tuo.
Quam producebam lætus, te sospite, vitam,
Erepto, pejor morte relicta mihi est.

Another named Torquatus, survived his father; and to him the consolatory poem of Bonamici is addressed; which indeed as a composition has little merit; but serves to illustrate some of the leading events of Bembo's life. *(Vide Carm. Illustr. Poet. Ital. tom.* ii.*)*

(*q*) The following is the bold language of an old Spanish writer with regard to Leo X.

While Leo, if these accounts are entitled to implicit credit, derived means for the support of his excesses and debaucheries by the open sale of indulgences, to the great disgrace of the Romish church, they united in ridiculing the christian religion in their moments of festivity, as a lucrative fable. By the same persons Bembo is charged with carrying his affected imitation of the style of Cicero to so ridiculous an extreme, as professedly to avoid the perusal of his bible and breviary, for fear of spoiling his latinity. (*r*)

"Fue un hombre atheista, que ni pensó aver cielo, ni infierno despues desta vida: y assi se murio sin recebir los sacramentos. Sanazaro dize que no los pudo recebir porque los avia vendido." (See the epigram of Sannazarius here alluded to, page 385 of this work.) "Veese tambien claramente su atheismo por la respuesta que dio al Cardenal Bembo, que le avia alegado cierto passo del Evangelio: al qual dissolutamente respondio Leon estas palabras: "Todo el mundo sabe quanto provecho aya traydo á nosotros, y á neustra compañia aquella fabula de Christo, &c." *Dos Tradatos: el prima es del Papa y de su autoridad: & el segundo es de la Missa.* 2d. *ed.* 8vo. 1599. the preface to which is dated 1588, and subscribed C. D. V. i. e. Cipriano de Valera. This singular production is numbered by bibliographers amongst works of very rare occurrence. (*Vide Diction. Bibliographique, vol.* iii. *p.* 136.) An English translation of the "Dos Tratados," was published at London, A. D. 1600, in 4to. It is inscribed by the translator, John Golburne, to Sir Thomas Egerton, Knight, Lord keeper of the great seal of England, &c. &c.

(*r*) Perhaps the following remark of so enquiring and judicious a writer as Dr. Jortin, may assist in redeeming the character of Bembus from some part of the obloquy thrown upon it. "It is said of Bembus that he spake contemptuously of the epistles of St. Paul, and that he denied the doctrine of a future state. But as these stories come not from the first hand, from any person who pretended to have heard him, we may consider them as false, or at least as very

As to pope Leo X. (*s*) whatever might be his errors or vices, it must be acknowledged

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uncertain rumours. If religion had not, yet prudence and decency would probably have restrained this polite cardinal from talking at such a rate." *(Life of Erasmus, vol.* i. *pag.* 466.*)*

(*s*) The coronation of Leo X. which took place thirty days after his election, was celebrated with a pomp and magnificence that had never been equalled on any similar occasion. The day of this ceremony was the anniversary of the unfortunate battle of Ravenna; and the very horse on which Leo rode was the same upon which he was mounted when he was taken prisoner in that action. "Protectæ erant aulæis regiones" (says the historian) "ridebant januæ civium festâ fronde et floribus, fenestræ stratæ tapetibus ornabantur; in omnibus biviis triumphales arcus occurrebant, ad veteris Romanæ magnitudinis exemplum picturis et statuis mirum in modum exornati. Cardinalium et Antistitum comitatus, usque ad humiliora servitia serico et purpurâ, multoque item auro præfulgebant: ipsi Cardinales sacras aureas et pictas induti vestes, militaribus equis vehebantur." *(Paulus Jovius in vitâ Leonis X.)* Never was solemnity so numerously and magnificently attended; never had Rome witnessed such a day of splendid festivity since the extinction of her ancient glory. Gold was thrown amongst the populace with lavish prodigality; and Leo is said to have expended on this spectacle an hundred thousand gold crowns.

Leo X. greatly augmented the library of the Vatican, and conferred the office of superintending this collection on the younger Beroaldus, a polite scholar, whose Latin verses of the lyric kind, if we may credit Jovius, possessed the elegance and correctness of Horace. Under the superintendance of learned men, who found an ample remuneration in the munificence of Leo, Rome beheld her schools and colleges rival those of Bologna and Padua in credit and number of students. Augustus Suessanus was appointed public lecturer in philosophy; Christophorus Aretinus in medicine; Hieronymus Butigella in jurisprudence; Parrhasius Cosentinus in humanity; while Basilius Chalcondyles, the son of Demetrius, filled the chair of Greek professor with great reputation. That city soon teemed with artists, poets, and literati, of various countries and talents; who were at least secure of a favourable reception, and frequently ob-

that learning and the arts found in him a distinguished friend. In the age of Leo X. that

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tained from the liberality of the pontiff rewards beyond all proportion to their deserts. But as the exertions of individuals to arrive at excellency are always analogous to the encouragement held out by the affluent and powerful, we need not wonder that under such a patron as Leo X learning and the arts were carried to a degree of perfection, beyond what they had hitherto attained since the revival of letters.

The warlike temper of Julius II. and the characteristic anecdote of him, that one day leaving Rome on a military expedition, he threw the keys of St. Peter into the Tiber, chusing rather to make use of the sword than the thunders of the Vatican, are recorded in a few lines by an anonymous poet:

> Inde manu strictam vaginâ diripit ensem,
> Exclamansque truci talia voce refert;
> " Hic gladius Pauli nos nunc defendet ab hoste,
> Quandoquidem clavis non juvat ista Petri."

But the martial air and sternness of character which the Romans had affected under the administration of Julius, soon yielded under Leo, to the humanizing influences of literature, and the elegancies of polished refinement. Among other testimonies of the mingled gratitude and adulation of a prosperous people, a triumphal arch was erected on the bridge of Hadrian, on which the following distich was inscribed, wherein the leading objects of Leo's pursuits are with classic delicacy contrasted with those of his predecessors:

OLIM HABVIT CYPRIS SVA TEMPORA TEMPORA MAVORS
OLIM HABVIT SVA NVNC TEMPORA PALLAS HABET.

and on another triumphal arch in a different situation, the following lines appeared in conspicuous characters:

VOTA DEVM LEO VT ABSOLVAS HOMINVMQVE SECVNDES
VIVE PIE VT SOLITVS VIVE DIV VT MERITVS.

of Augustus seemed to revive. He surpassed in munificence all the Roman pontiffs that

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In these times, so propitious to literature, says P. Jovius, every thing conspired to the prosperity of Rome. Every thing wore the semblance of wealth and gaiety. Plenty poured her blessings on the inhabitants in rich profusion, and the seasons were unwontedly salubrious and productive. It seemed, says he, as if under the auspices of Leo X. the golden age was again restored. But this, alas! was a golden age divested of its innocency as well as its simplicity.

When Giuliano de' Medici, the brother of Leo X. was agreeably to the general voice, presented with the freedom of the city, public shews and rejoicings were ordained in honour of this event: and as a classic turn was uniformly given to the festivities of the times, a temporary theatre was erected near the capitol, and the Pænulus of Plautus was successively exhibited for two days to a numerous and brilliant assemblage, with the most splendid decorations; verses were publicly recited; and every individual strove by his personal splendour and gaiety to second the wishes of the pontiff; who in return for these expensive testimonies of respect on the part of the citizens, diminished the duty on salt, and granted them various privileges and immunities. Hence in token of the general gratitude, a marble statue was erected in the capitol to the honour of Leo, with this inscription: "Optimi liberalissimique principis memoriæ, S. P. Q. R."

Leo was particularly attentive to the regular administration of justice. He adopted wise and spirited measures to prevent the effects of those private feuds and family animosities, which often involved the unoffending in their baneful consequences: and the assurance of personal security was scarcely a less powerful consideration than the certainty of pecuniary advantage to induce strangers to settle at Rome. On a general census held under his pontificate, the population of Rome amounted to 85000 persons. But a very short period made a surprizing change in this particular. At the time P. Jovius composed his life of Leo X. he asserts that the number was by a recent census, found to be already reduced to 32000.

The praise of munificence was that to which Leo most aspired. It was a maxim with him that those deserve not to be exalted to the rank of sovereigns who are unwilling to dispense the gifts of fortune with a liberal hand. Strangers

had preceded him. To be a liberal patron of the sciences was his highest ambition; and in

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and citizens indiscriminately shared his bounty:—the indifferent artist, the half-learned scholar, and the brainsick bard. Those who came to gaze at the splendour of his appearance in public, were frequently known to experience his unexpected generosity, when their mien or attire betrayed indigence; and he is said daily to have replenished with gold a particular purse which was appropriated to these casual acts of benevolence.

While Leo with equal magnificence and profusion thus supported the character of a sovereign prince, he was too prone to forget the gravity of the pontiff. He delighted in exposing to public ridicule those characteristic infirmities of some of his courtiers, which his own penetration easily discovered. For such a purpose he appointed his secretary Tarrasconi director of his concerts, an office for which he was totally unfit, while he had the vanity to think himself eminently qualified for it; deferred in every question that respected music to his judgment, and suffered the wrists of his musicians to be bandaged on Tarrasconi's foolish suggestion, that they would thus touch their instruments with an additional elasticity, highly favourable to the general effect. He flattered Baraballi, an unfortunate old man of an honourable family of Gaieta, in the illusive fancy, that he was not only the first of poets, but absolutely another Petrarch. He encouraged him to aspire to the honour of a public coronation and triumph, in imitation of that bard. And at length, on an appointed day, amidst an immense concourse of spectators, among whom was Jovius, he caused the deluded poet, whose long white beard, and portly but venerable form gave an interest to his appearance, to be mounted on an elephant and conducted towards the capitol, attended with all the pomp, and decorated with the insignia of an ancient triumph; himself alone among so many thousands, unconscious of the ridiculousness of his own situation. The elephant terrified with the sound of musical instruments, and the glare of his own magnificent trappings, could not, we are told, be conducted beyond the bridge of Hadrian; and Varillas informs us, the indignant brute manifested his resentment in a way that had nearly proved fatal to the poet and many of his attendants. The particulars of this adventure were afterwards expressed in carved work, on the doors of one of the apartments of the papal palace.

this respect he zealously followed the example of Lorenzo his father. He invited to his court

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But these were venial aberrations from decorum in comparison with those excesses which Leo's example sanctioned, or at which his indifference connived. The few who amidst this more than syren fascination, still retained any sense of decency, were constrained to blush on beholding ecclesiastics mingling without reserve, in every species of pleasurable dissipation. The younger cardinals especially, many of whom were junior branches of royal or illustrious houses, exulted in the free participation of indulgences to which the most sacred characters were no restraint. Rome frequently saw her court, with a multitude of attendants and an immense apparatus, accompany the supreme pontiff to partake of the sports of the field. Under the direction of the ingenious cardinal Bibiena, whose versatile talents appeared to equal advantage on serious, festive, or ludicrous occasions, the spacious apartments of the Vatican were metamorphosed into theatres. The pontifical tables teemed with luxurious viands that realized the refinements of Apicius; and particular seasons afforded a sanction to the freedoms and buffooneries of the ancient Saturnalia. Jovius acknowledges that Hadrian, a man of frugal character, could not examine without shuddering, the particulars of those enormous disbursements which marked the domestic establishment of his predecessor.

As things opposite in their natures often appear to more advantage by being contrasted with each other, the preceding sketch of the pontificate of Leo X. may perhaps acquire additional interest from a comparison with the following; in which an attempt is made to delineate the most prominent features of his successor's character and administration.

In the conclave for the choice of a proper person to fill the chair of St. Peter when vacant by the decease of Leo X. great and long protracted discussions prevailed. The younger cardinals were strenuous for the election of Giulio de' Medici, whose wealth and influence placed him at their head. The seniors were bent upon the advancement of some one of their own body, and each secretly desired that the tiara might grace his own brow. To such lengths were their animosities carried, that they mutually assailed each other's characters with the grossest ribaldry, and the most defamatory pasquinades, to the great diversion of the inhabitants of Rome; but, as Paulus Jovius adds, much to the diminution

from all parts those who were remarkable for their literary attainments, or skill in any art.

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of that reverence in which the sacred college in particular, and the sacerdotal order in general had been previously held. At length when the seniors on a certain occasion accused their younger brethren of losing sight of that zeal for the advancement of religion, which ought solely to influence their choice; and the latter warmly retorted the charge; — Giulio de' Medici suddenly proposed the absent and unambitious CARDINALIS DERTHUNENSIS, on the ground of his piety and sanctity of life. The seniors, taken by surprize, and wholly occupied by the various passions which agitated them, inconsiderately acceded to the proposal; and Hadrian was elected pontiff:

—— Votis Hadrianus omnium
Fit Pontifex, sed omnibus
(Quis credat?) invitis.
(Joan. Pierius Valerianus Hadrian. Pont. Max. designato.)

Hadrian was deeply versed in the writings of the schoolmen, and was deemed one of the profoundest theologians, metaphysicians, civilians and canonists of his time. When Hermolaus Barbarus going on an embassy to the Emperor Frederick, and his son Maximilian, paid a visit to the university of Lorrain, Hadrian was singled out from among all the students to respond to him on philosophical subjects; and acquitted himself greatly to the admiration and praise of the Italian scholar. *(Moringi vita Hadriani.)*

He seems to have merited the character of undissembled piety and integrity, and was one of those few pontiffs who entertained a sincere wish to reform the abuses of the church of Rome. These qualities, together with his great frugality, his marked aversion to pomp and splendour, and his abolition of idle offices and sinecures, were sufficient to make him odious to the Italians; and rendered his reign a remarkable contrast to that of Leo X. In his time moreover Rome was depopulated by a pestilence; and the external affairs of the church wore an aspect as adverse as in the days of Leo X. it had been flourishing and propitious. He found an exhausted treasury, and a revenue scarcely equal to the discharge of those debts for which it stood pledged. Hence he was obliged to adopt means of recruiting the finances of the church which were most unpopular. Those who had

Nor did he suffer persons whose talents were not of the first order to remain destitute of

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expended their patrimony in the purchase of lucrative offices, finding their profits cut off or abridged, complained heavily of this breach, as they termed it, of public faith; and the rage of one of these persons thus aggrieved, arose to such a height, that the terrified Hadrian narrowly escaped assassination by his hand. Hence, says Jovius, he found the saying of an ancient writer verified: "MULTUM REFERRE AD FELICIOREM FORTUNAM AD QUÆ TEMPORA ALICUJUS VEL PRÆCLARA VIRTUS INCIDISSET."

Hadrian finding himself an entire stranger to the transactions of the pontifical court, and at the same time scrupulously desirous of acting aright, acquired an appearance of hesitation and indecision in the dispatch of public business. Hieronymus Balbus sent on an embassy to stimulate the pontiff's speedy exertions against those two formidable enemies the Lutherans and the Turks, dared thus to reproach the pontiff in full senate: "Fabius Maximus, Sanctissime Pater, rem Romanam cunctando restituit. Tu verò pariter cunctando rem Romanam simulque Europam perdere contendis."

For polite letters and the fine arts Hadrian appears to have been devoid of all taste. He disliked poets, as suspecting them to be more studious of conforming their productions to ancient precedents and gentile theology than was consistent with the profession of christianity. On Paulus Jovius he conferred a benefice, expressly because with the office of an annalist, and the study of polite letters, he did not combine, like too many others, the reputation of a poet: "ita ut aliquando plùs mihi profuerit" (says Jovius) "non attigisse pöeticam, quam in cæteris gravioribus studiis perpetuo multorum annorum labore desudâsse." *(Vita Hadriani VI.)*

Burman in his "Analecta Historica de Hadriano VI." *pr. Trajecti ad Rhen.* 1727, *in* 4to. has collected whatever documents he could find for the illustration of this pontiff's life. But the "Lettere de' Principi," published *in Venezia*, 1581, *et aliis annis, in* 3 *vols.* 4to. afford us some curious particulars concerning Hadrian which have been overlooked by Burman. Giralomo Negro, in his letters to Messer Marc-Antonio Micheli, is the sprightly writer who furnishes these notices. By him we find the following anecdote of Hadrian related, which is confirmed by others. He had given to a

encouragement ; such was the pleasure he took in rewarding even a desire to excel. His

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nephew of his a benefice with a revenue of seventy *ducati*. Another falling vacant, for which his nephew also made application; he received from the pontiff a severe rebuff: who alleged, that the benefice of seventy ducati was amply sufficient for his maintenance : but induced by many intreaties to confer upon him that of one hundred, he first obliged him to resign the other. " Dio lo conservi" (adds Girolamo Negro) " in questo buon proposito, et li dia forza di essequirlo. Ma dubito, che, come beva di questo fiume Leteo, non mandi in oblivione tutti questi santi pensieri, et massimamente, perche natura non tolerat repentinas mutationes; essendo la Corte più corrotta, che fosse mai, non vi vedo alcuna dispositione atta a ricever così tosto queste buone intentioni. Sed ipsi viderint." This letter was written before Hadrian's arrival at Rome. *(Vide Lettere di Principi, p.* 98.*)*

The same writer gives an account of the arrival and reception of Hadrian at Rome; of his coronation, &c. Coming afterwards to his private character, he very cautiously observes, that appearances are not to be trusted, " perche in animis hominum multi sunt recessus, multæ latebræ, ut præclarè noster Cicero admonet, et massimamente in questi Preti, i quali patiuntur metamorphosim, che spesso di pastori divengono lupi. L' esempio" (he adds) " è in pronto di Papa Leone, il quale entrò nel pontificato con nome di cosi benigno, e uscì poi con la fama di sì fiero."

After other matter, " this pontiff," (says he) " has but two chamberlains, both Flemings; " huomini stupidi e marmorei" and a very small household. He is regardless of servants and equipage, and when urged by certain cardinals to assume a little more splendour in this particular, declared he at present could not; being desirous first to liquidate the debts of the church; but that he would afterwards turn his attention to other matters. The other day, says he, the equerries of Leo deputed to him one of their order, who might address him in behalf of the rest. The pope enquired what was their number in the time of Leo X. We were then, said the man, more than a hundred. On hearing of so many, the holy father (say they) crossed himself, and replied, he thought four amply sufficient: but he would keep twelve, in order to exceed the number kept by the cardinals, since *etiquette* required him to do this. In fine,

occasional sale of offices, honours, dignities and the like, was the consequence of pecu-

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adds this writer, " commune opinione è, che costui debbia essere buon cassiere della Chiesa; di che veramente ce n'e bisognò per la prodigalità di Leone." *(p. 108.)*

At one time reading certain Latin letters composed with great elegance, he exclaimed, " Sunt literæ unius poetæ," by way of ridiculing the eloquence displayed in them. When in the Belvidere several monuments of antiquity, and especially the celebrated statue of Laocöon were shewn him, he observed, " Sunt idola Antiquorum." So that, adds this writer, it is not a little to be apprehended that he will one day do the same thing which San. Gregorio is said to have done: and perhaps of these fine statues, the striking memorials of Rome's former greatness and glory, he will order a cement to be made for the building of St. Peter's. Aware of the small encouragement to be expected from this stern pontiff, so little the friend of the graces and the muses, Sadoleto, Bembo, Vida, and others who signalized themselves as the cultivators of polite literature, willingly fled the court, and buried themselves in voluntary retirement and seclusion. The first mentioned of these scholars asked and obtained leave to retire to his diocese of Carpentras. " All Rome" (says Girolamo) " wonders that his Holiness would permit his departure. I wonder not at it, since the pope knows him not, nor can appreciate him. " Roma" (he adds) " non è più Roma. Usciti d' una peste, siamo entrati in una maggiore. Questo Pontefice non conosce nessuno: non si vede una gratia. Omnia sunt plenissima desperationis, senza che questo stato stà sopra una punta d'ago per molte cause; et Dio voglia, che presto non fuggiamo in Avignone a turbar la quiete, & gli studj del Vescovo di Carpentras che sarà lì vicino, overo ad ultimum oceanum, alla patria del Papa. &c." *(p. 113.)*

In another letter Girolamo Negro informs his friend, that the whole court is greatly dissatisfied with the rigorous disposition of the prince, who is very parsimonious of his favours; whether this proceeds from his little experience and his distrust of the merits of those about him, or from conscientious scruples, and the fear of acting erroneously. But whatever might be the justness of his reasons, these avail not, he adds, to satisfy " la Corte male avezza." He subjoins this striking expression which proceeding from the pen of an Italian, certainly deserves to be considered as a conces-

niary embarrassments arising from his profuse liberality, the public buildings which he erected

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sion to truth, and a counterbalance to whole pages of scandal lavished upon him by the licentious pens of corrupt and disingenuous writers. "The same thing may be said of him which Cicero said of Cato: "HIC DICIT TANQUAM IN PLATONIS POLITIA, NON IN ROMULI FECE SENTENTIAM." *(p. 114.)*

At the conclusion of the same letter, he observes, that Pasquin is much out of temper, because the pope has declared he will not permit him to have "la sua festa di San Marco," and gives it to be understood, that if he detects any one speaking ill of himself or of any other person, he will have him severely punished. *p.* 115. Hadrian, says P. Jovius, not a little irritated against the licentious poets, had resolved that the statue of Pasquin should be demolished and thrown into the Tyber. Ludovicus Suessanus, ambassador of Charles V. a person of courtly manners, and a ready wit, opposed this measure; alleging that Pasquin would not even then be quiet, but like the frogs would be heard to croak even out of the mud. "Then" (said the pontiff) "let him be burnt to ashes, that no trace or vestige of him may remain." "Holy Father," (replied Suessanus) "the family of poets would not fail to revenge the cruel execution of their favourite bard and patron, by defamatory songs; and every year, at a stated time, would by way of retaliation, meet in crouds to commemorate the place and manner of his punishment." By these jocose arguments he succeeded in alleviating the resentment of the pontiff, and restoring him to good humour. *(Vita Hadr. p.* 134.*)*

Hadrian, as before observed, was utterly averse to that pomp and shew which were always so agreeable to the Italians. He seldom appeared in public, and generally buried himself in silence in the innermost apartments of the Vatican; which in the language of one of his calumniators, was then no longer "Domus illa pontificia, et ocellus urbis ut quondam, sed domus aliqua ut Poetæ tradunt, quæ propter lemurum formidinem vacua et deserta præ solitudine videbatur." Girolamo Negro speaking of this pontiff's accidental appearance on a certain occasion abroad on horseback, observes, "Cavalca senza pompa, et senza far motto a' Cardinali, i quali spesso, intendendo il Papa essere cavalcato, gli corrono dietro in quella guisa, che fanno i servitori a' loro Cardinali." The reign of this pontiff continued only twenty

or beautified; and lastly, the wars in which policy sometimes prompted him to engage.

Onuphrius in vitâ Pont. Leon. X.

The letters which Bembus wrote in the Latin language in the name of Leo X. may be found arranged in twelve books, and published with the rest of his epistles. Among other commissions of importance in which he was engaged, he undertook at the pope's instance an embassy to Venice, for the purpose of detaching his countrymen from their alliance with the king of France, and engaging them to take a part in the coalition formed against that monarch by the emperor, the king of Spain, and the Roman pontiff. While he resided at Rome, he had a peculiar oppor-

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months. He had just published with great solemnity the league of the combined christian powers against the Turks, when an indisposition under which he then laboured, assumed more dangerous symptoms, and speedily became fatal. He died, not without suspicion of having been poisoned; and some persons had the audacity when the news of his decease was spread abroad, to affix, during the night, a tablet on the door of his confidential physician's residence, with these words in capital letters,

LIBERATORI PATRIÆ S. P. Q. R.

Over the place of his sepulture in the church of St. Peter, a temporary monument was placed, with this inscription:

HADRIANUS SEXTUS HIC SITUS EST
QUI NIHIL SIBI INFELICIUS IN VITA DUXIT
QUAM QUOD IMPERARET.

But a more splendid monument was afterwards erected to his memory, by the gratitude of cardinal Gulielmus Erchabordius, whom he had advanced, on his death-bed, to this dignity; "in templo Deiparæ Virginis Germanorum ad Arcum Flaminium:" an elegant engraving of which may be found *apud Burmanni Analecta Histor. de Hadriano VI. supradict.*

tunity of indulging his taste for antiquities: and he is ranked among the most scientific collectors of statues, medals, and other ancient and classical remains. (*t*) Besides other literary curiosities that enriched his museum, particular mention is made of two beautiful and finely ornamented manuscripts of Virgil and Terence, which were supposed to have survived the ravages of time upwards of a thousand years; and of an autograph of the Italian poems of Petrarch, by which Aldus corrected the edition of them published by him in 1501. That printer, who lay under various other literary obligations to Bembus, in his preface to the edition of Pindar, published anno 1513, terms him "Decus eruditorum ætatis nostræ, et magnæ spes altera Romæ."

The celebrated Erasmus who was for some time the guest of Aldus at Venice, and a sharer in his literary labours, has afforded the admirers of typographical antiquities some curious information respecting the ANCHOR and DOLPHIN, the well known symbol or *imprese* of that eminent printer. Aldus himself shewed him a silver medal of Titus Vespasian bearing evident marks of age and authenticity: on the obverse of which was the head of Titus, with the usual legend: on the reverse, an anchor encompassed by a dolphin. This medal was, he adds, presented to Aldus,

Vide "Adagia Erasmi, in Adagio "Festina lentè."

(*t*) "Eodem studio quoque bibliothecam sibi omnium generum omniumque linguarum codicibus, tum typis tum calamo descriptis, instructissimam Bembus paraverat, quorum non pauci in Vaticanam Bibliothecam ex Urbinate sunt translati." *(Zeno.)*

by Bembus: "a Petro Bembo, Patritio Veneto, juvene cum inter primos erudito, tum omnis literariæ antiquitatis diligentissimo pervestigatore." The anchor and dolphin, like the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, and of others of the ancients (who deemed it impious to reveal to the profane vulgar the profound maxims of wisdom, by expressing them in the written characters then in general use) involve an important enigmatical signification. They imply that which is known by the testimony of ancient historians, to have been a favourite maxim of the Emperor Augustus, and afterwards of Titus, σπευδε βραδεως. Erasmus has shewn at large, from the works of Oppian and Pliny, that the ancients believed the *impetus* and velocity of the dolphin's motion to surpass that of any other creature, either of the aquatic or winged tribe. The poet attributes to his movements the swiftness of the arrow, and the impetuosity of the tempest. The anchor on the other hand, destined to restrain the too rapid course of the vessel, and enable it to resist the force of the gale, is an appropriate emblem of salutary tardiness and caution. Thus, proceeds Erasmus, this significant sentence σπευδε βραδεως, is plainly derived from the secret and abstruse philosophy of remotest ages, whence it was selected by two of the most justly celebrated Roman emperors, to serve as a proverbial maxim to the one, and to constitute the implied subject of the other's emblematical device; nor could any other adage have more exactly quadrated with the respective genius and temper of each. It hath now devolved upon ALDUS MANUTIUS ROMANUS as its third heir:

Vide Suetonium.

"Haud equidem sine mente reor, sine numine divûm."

An indisposition of a tedious and obstinate nature, the effect of late watching, close application, and the fatigues of office, rendering some respite and a change of situation absolutely necessary, with the advice of his physicians, seconded by the instances of Leo, Bembus retired to Padua for the sake of its air and baths. The death of the pontiff, (*w*) which happened during his absence, prevented his return to Rome. He therefore chose to continue his residence at Padua, in the tranquil enjoyment of the "otium cum dignitate;" and there divided his time between his literary labours and the conversation of learned men. His hours, we are told, were sometimes agreeably diversified by the delights of an extensive garden; where he amused and recreated himself with botanical researches; usually spending the summer season at Villabozza, in the vicinity of Padua, his paternal inheritance, and the scene of a great part of his juvenile studies.

Beccatelli in vita di P. Bembo.

This comparatively secluded tenour of life Bembus preserved, not only through the short pontificate of Hadrian VI. but also during that of his successor Clement VII. seldom visiting the ancient and venerable seat of papal dignity. His attention during part of this long interval, was employed upon his "Prose," (*x*)

(*w*) Leo died in December, 1521, in his forty-fifth year, as it is supposed, by poison: "Non sine veneni suspicione rebus humanis excessit." *(Onuphrius in vit. ejus.)*

(*x*) This work bears the following title: "Prose di

a work which he had begun long before, but had been prevented by his engagements at Rome from completing.

Upon the death of Andrea Navagero, in 1529, to whom the task had been publicly deputed, of recording in the page of history the transactions of the Venetian republic, the council of ten unanimously fixed upon Bembus to supply this loss. His advanced age, for he was now in his sixtieth year, did not prevent him from acceding to this honourable request of his countrymen. In writing this history, which he completed in twelve books, we are told, he professedly chose the style of Cæsar as his model.

Clement VII. dying September, 1534, the Cardinal Farnese was elected to the pontificate, and assumed the name of Paul III. Willing to manifest his regard for the republic

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M. Pietro Bembo nelle quali si ragiona della volgar lingua; scritte al Cardinale de' Medici che poi è stato creato a sommo Pontefice, & detto Clemente Settimo; divise in tre libri." First printed in folio, *Venetiis per Joan. Tacuinum an.* 1525. An enlarged edition with an index by Benedictus Varchius, was published in 4to. by Laur. Torrentinus, *Flor.* 1548. Bembus was the first person, says Apostolus Zenus, who explained to his countrymen the mechanism and construction of their native language.

The Italian poems of Bembus, intituled "Rime di M. Pietro Bembo," were collected and printed for the first time, *Venetiis per Joan. Ant. et Fratres a Sablio, an.* 1530, in 4to. A third and enlarged edition appeared at Rome, 1548. Bembus is said to have left among other unpublished works, a MS. entitled "Delle Vite e Rime de' Poeti Provenzali;" which came into the possession of his biographer Beccatelli. We are informed that he employed much time and pains in the study of the old Provençal writers: "cui linguæ," (says Zeno) "quis inficietur plurimum debere Italas musas?"

of Venice, by the advancement of one of its nobility, he is supposed early to have destined Bembus to the cardinalship. But in consequence of objections, secretly urged, against the lighter part of his writings, and some of the events of his past life, his appointment was not publicly announced till the beginning of the year 1539. (*y*) On his acceptance of this dignity, the *insignia* of which, from his predilection for retirement, he is said to have assumed with reluctance, he determined, says Beccatelli, to devote himself wholly to the duties of his office. "Il che fece" (says he) "& altro più non lesse che scritture sante."

As nothing appears upon record to impeach the moral or religious conduct of Bembus at this period, we are justified in concluding

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(*y*) Among the "Lettere volgari di diversi nobilissimi uomini," 8vo. *apud Aldum.* 1551, are several congratulatory letters to Bembo on his exaltation to this dignity. From the language of these letters we are led to infer that this event was generally expected to have taken place at an earlier period; and it seems to have been delayed by some cause rather alluded to than clearly specified. "Dovevano molto prima, Reverendissimo Signor mio, le preclare & singulari virtu vostre havervi inalzato a questo si degno grado, se forse Iddio non havesse egli altramente disposto," &c. *(Il Fracastoro al Cardinal Bembo, fol. 22.)* It is spoken of as a dignity that could no longer with propriety be withheld from a person of his singular merit. (*See the letter of Marc. Antonio de Mula, fol. 56.*) Francesco Guicciardini professes himself gratified not more by the honour conferred on his friend, than that by his prudence, steadiness, and firmness, he had been at length enabled to rise superior to the malice of fortune. *(Lib. ii. fol. 7.)* These letters also countenance a hint thrown out by one of Bembo's biographers, that had his life been prolonged, it was not improbable he would in time have been exalted to the dignity of supreme pontiff.

that he conducted himself in all respects as became his ecclesiastical dignity and character. It is by no means uncommon for the habits and views of the same person to be different at different seasons of life. It would therefore be unjust, to charge all the levities and indiscretions of the young man upon the cardinal. Yet he has perhaps suffered not a little in the latter character, for the actions and writings of the former. (z)

He had long enjoyed a good state of health, if we except occasional indispositions from slight attacks of the gout. At length the infirmities of old age began to steal on him, and his sight to be impaired. His death was accelerated by an accident, which he met with

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(z) The archbishop of Benevento makes use of a similar mode of reasoning, in his attempt to exculpate himself from a charge of a more aggravated nature than any that has been brought against his friend Bembus.

> " Annis abhinc triginta et amplius, scio
> Nonnulla me, fortasse non castissimis
> Lusisse versibus, quod ætas tunc mea
> Rerum me adegit inscia; & semper jocis
> Licentiùs gavisa concessu omnium
> Juventa: quod fecêre & alii item boni.
> At nunc abît juventa,—lusus permanet;
> Et carmini illi nomen adscribunt meum
> Idem quod ante erat, nec adscribunt diem
> Eandem: erat quæ, quando id olim lusimus:
> Sed quod puer peccavit, accusant senem."
>
> *(Casa ad Germanos.)*

Several however of the earlier productions of Bembus are too licentious to admit of any apology. We can only lament that poesy and erudition in these and other instances, should so often have been made by early scholars subservient to the purposes of immorality.

while riding on horseback. In passing through a small postern, he received a bruise on his side, which brought on a slow fever. He was sensible of his approaching dissolution, and conversed chearfully with his friends on that subject. He died January 20, 1547, aged 76 years and eight months.

The following epitaph was by direction of his son Torquato inscribed on his tomb.

PETRO. BEMBO. PATRITIO
VENETO. OB. EIVS. SINGVLARES
VIRTVTES. A. PAVLO. III. PON. MAX.
IN. SACRVM. COLLEGIVM. COOPTATO
TORQVATVS. BEMBUS. P.

Marc-Antoine Muret is cited by Zeno, as observing, that after the restoration of letters, chiefly by means of the Medicean family, innumerable writers of Latin on every science appeared, but very few in a style not to say faultless, but even possessing any semblance of pure and classical latinity. "Ut Græci proverbio dicunt multos esse qui thyrsum ferunt, sed paucos Bacchos, ita multorum falsâ quâdam latini sermonis specie inducta et oblita oratio est, paucorum latinâ. Duo in Italiâ summi viri duces ceteris ad hanc laudem capessandam, et quasi antesignani fuerunt, Jacobus Sadoletus, et Petrus Bembus."

Bembus, says Casa, was the first to look back to the ancient models, to correct the perverted taste that generally prevailed; and to persuade his countrymen rather to imitate Cicero, Virgil, and Cæsar, in their Latin compositions, than Apuleius, Macrobius and Statius.

The obligations which the Italian language lay under to Bembo, are thus comprehensively expressed (*a*) in an epigram of Cynthius Joannes Baptista Gyraldi of Ferrara :

" Thusca tuo debes Petrarchæ Musa Parenti
Multum, Bembeæ sed magis una lyræ ;
Namque is te genuit,—Bembus revocavit ab Orco ;
Illud mortale est ; hoc reor esse Dei."

Carm. Illustr. Poetar. Italor. tom. v.

Among the Italian poems of Bembo, his ode or *canzone* to the memory of his brother Carlo, who died young, has been universally approved as a perfect model in that species of composition. His Latin poems are in general classically elegant and correct. He has been particularly successful in some of his epigrams; among which his " Raphaelis Urbinatis Pictoris Epitaphium," is deserving of special mention :

" Hic ille est RAPHAEL, metuit quo sospite vinci
Rerum magna Parens, et moriente, mori."

(*a*) Apostolo Zeno introduces an observation of Varchius *(in Herculano, page* 24,*)* to the same effect. " Primo il Bembo di tutti, osservando le regole della grammatica, e mettendo in opera gli ammaestramenti del bene e artificiosamente scrivere, l' imitò (Petrarcham scilicet) da dovero, e rassomigliandosi a lui, mostrò la piana e diritta via del leggiadramente, e lodevolmente comporre nella lingua Fiorentina."

" Bembo, che 'l puro, e dolce idioma nostro
Levato fuor del volgar uso tetro,
Quale esser dee, ci ha col suo esempio mostro."

(Ariosto. " Orland. Fur." Canto ult.)

Bembus was generally sparing in his diet, and often studied with long and intense application. He was nice to a degree of fastidiousness in the choice of his words and forms of expression; and repeatedly corrected his works. He was also particularly successful in some of his classical imitations. By the following attempt in a species of literary deception then perhaps fashionable, he is said to have effectually imposed for a time upon the whole university of Ferrara. For the idea however at least, Bembus was himself perhaps indebted to some existing remains of ancient sculpture. Montfaucon has given an engraved representation of a funeral scene corresponding with the poetical picture which Bembus has drawn.

L' Antiquité Expliquée. Prem. Partie p. 16. A Paris. 1719, in fol.

FICTUM PRO ANTIQUO.

Ælia natorum manesque sequuta mariti,
Usa suâ jacet hìc Septimiana manu.
Vir Turrinus erat, cum quo tria lustra peregit,
Jurgiaque in sancto nulla fuêre toro.
Binaque de primo suscepit pignora partu,
Dein natam matris spemque metumque suæ.
Crudeles Divi! proles adoleverat, at Mors
Injecit tetricas perviolenta manus.
Post quæ moerentem, ne quid superesset amanti,
Abstulit orbatæ proxima luna virum:
Quem simul ac flammâ vidit lambente cremari,
"Ergo ibis, tecum nec tua, dixit, erit?
Eripies mihi tu nunquam hoc, Fortuna: licebit
Hoc saltem invitâ te potuisse mihi."
Dixerat, et stricto fixit sua pectora ferro:
Sic moriens caro nunc quoque juncta viro est.

HERE ÆLIA lies, who self-devoted, prov'd
A willing death to join the shades she lov'd.
Her spouse TURRINUS, full three lustres sped,
Nor discord once disturb'd the nuptial bed.
Twin pledges first her fond embraces share;
A daughter next, her pride and anxious care.
Unpitying Gods! in youth's maturing bloom
Her offspring sunk untimely to the tomb.
Next of her spouse, her last sad solace left,
One short revolving moon the wife bereft.
Now seen his corse to fun'ral fires consign'd;
"Fliest thou! and lingers yet thy love behind?
Here Fate, thy power shall fail, affection's tie
To rend again shall thy worst rage defy!"
She said—then in her bosom plung'd the sword,
Nor dying—was dissever'd from her lord.

To Bembus Fracastor inscribed his "Syphilis." He was frequently solicited to revise the compositions of others. Ariosto is reported to have subjected to the revisal of Bembus his "Orlando Furioso," and even Sannazarius, it is said, submitted his celebrated poem "De Partu Virginis" to the critical inspection of the same person previously to its publication. In discharging the office of a literary censor, he was candid, and seldom harshly severe. But Beccatelli furnishes us with one instance of his critical severity, in the following words:

In vita di P. Bembo.

"Vero e che intesi da persona degna di fede in Bologna, che havendoli uno di quei poeti assai inetto portato a mostrare, mentre che di la passava, un suo libraccio di molti versi in rima, scritto però di buona mano, & pregatolo che per quel giorno, o due, che so-

prastava del viaggio, lo vedesse, & che trovando cosa alcuna, che non li sodisfacesse, la notasse con un poco di cera in margine, perche poi si potesse levar senza offesa, tornato il valente huomo per il libro, la vista del quale in pochi versi haveva stracco M. Pietro, & guardando, nè trovandoli note alcune di cera, tutto allegro disse: Dunque V. S. l' approva senza eccettione, poiche vedo che in niuna parte l'hà tocco. A che M. Pietro rispose, Io l'ho fatto per manco briga persuadendomi che sia meglio il dirvi che lo portiate ad un spetiale, quando fa candele, & tutto lo atuffiate in un tratto nella caldaja della cera, della quale ne pigliaria a bastanza per sodisfare al desiderio vostro, & al giudicio mio."

A statue was erected at Padua to the memory of Bembo, at the expense of his friend Hieronimo d' Ismerio Quirino, with the following inscription:

PETRI. BEMBI. CARD. IMAGINEM
HIERONYMVS. QVIRINVS. ISMERII. F
IN. PVBLICO. PONENDAM. CVRAVIT
VT. CVIVS. INGENII
MONVMENTA. AETERNA. SINT
EIVS. CORPORIS. QVOQVE. MEMORIA
NE. A. POSTERITATE. DESIDERETVR.
VIX. ANN. LXXVI. M. VII. D.XXIX
OBIIT. XV. CAL. FEBR. M.D.XLVII.

The memory of Bembo was honoured with the following additional sepulchral eulogy, by the pen of cardinal Sadoleto, his ancient friend and colleague, whose praise derives weight from the character of the person who bestowed it:

DEO IMM. S.

ET VIRTUTI AC MEMORIÆ PETRI BEMBI PATRITII VENETI, S. R. E. CARDINALIS, CUJUS INGENII, LITERARUM, ELOQUENTIÆ, GLORIA IN SUO SÆCULO PRINCEPS, ET ANTIQUORUM LAUDIBUS PAR ; GRATIA AUTEM IN AMPLISSIMO ORDINE, IN MORIBUS PROBITAS, HUMANITAS, LIBERALITAS, SUPRA COMMUNEM MODUM SEMPER EXISTIMATA SUNT ; QUOD DE EJUS VITA HOMINUM JUDICIUM, BEATA MORS SANCTISSIME AB EO ET PACATISSIME OBITA, DIVINO QUOQUE CONFIRMAVIT TESTIMONIO.

Amongst the numerous poetical effusions to which the same event gave rise, the following by Angelus Colotius (*b*) is worthy to be

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(*b*) ANGELUS COLOTIUS descended from an illustrious family of the city of Esino, obtained whilst yet a youth, the honour of knighthood ; which was conferred upon him by the hands of Andreas Palæologus Despota, who then a refugee at Rome was recognized as the legitimate heir to the imperial diadem of Constantinople. Colotius was a disciple of Georgius Valla. For political reasons, which are recited by Ubaldinus in his life of this illustrious scholar, the family of the Colocci, were obliged, in the pontificate of Innocent VIII. to abandon the city of Rome where they had taken up their residence. Angelus, in consequence repaired to Naples ; and during his exile in that city became a member of the Academia Pontana, under the assumed name of Angelus Colotius Bassus ; whence originated his intimate connection with the principal members of that literary society. He returned to Rome about the time when Pontanus was sent as the ambassador of Ferdinand, king of Naples, to negotiate a peace with the Roman pontiff. After successively obtaining various honourable and lucrative situations in the pontifical court, he was nominated by Leo X. to the succession of the bishopric of Nocera : but with the actual possession of this dignity and its emoluments he was not invested

distinguished, as the production of a person who combined the most extensive acquire-

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till the year 1533, in the pontificate of Paul III. He continued therefore to reside during this long interval at Rome in great affluence ; and with distinguished literary reputation.

The extensive and delightful gardens of Colotius, which, in addition to the most captivating scenery resulting from a happy combination of nature and art, were adorned with a profusion of statues, inscriptions, and other elegant remains of classic antiquity, revived the magnificence and amenity of the celebrated HORTI SALLUSTIANI, of which they were supposed to occupy the actual site. These gardens were the favorite resort of the learned, and were considered as the repository of the arts, and of letters. The noble hospitality of the proprietor gave additional attractions to these haunts of the muses: and especially after the decease of Pomponius Lætus, the palace and gardens of Colocci became the asylum of the academy. Colotius himself who was no less remarkable for his literary attainments, than for his wealth and splendour, was universally honoured "quasi URBANORUM INGENIORUM CORYPHÆUS."

Few of the literary productions of Colotius have been made public, probably because they were for the most part left in an unfinished state. Several fugitive epigrams and other poems, cited by his biographer Ubaldinus however, sufficiently assert his claim to the poetic wreath. For a fountain which ornamented the gardens of Colocci, his classic taste induced him to select the following lines as an appropriate inscription:

HUJUS Nympha loci, sacri custodia fontis,
Dormio dum blandæ sentio murmur aquæ.
Parce meum quisquis tangis cava marmora somnum
Rumpere, sive bibas, sive lavère, tace.

Ubaldini supposes Colocci to be the author of the foregoing inscription: but in this conjecture he is probably mistaken. We have already *(in page* 281 *of these Memoirs, note (i)* introduced a translation of the same epigram by Girolamo Benivieni, which was undoubtedly executed a considerable time before the existence of the Horti Colotiani: and Montfaucon *(Antiquitè Expliquèe, &c. tom.* i. *part* 2, *p.* 386. *Paris.* 1719, *in fol.)* has given an engraving of an ancient

ments in elegant literature, with all the urbanity and munificence that could adorn a dignified station and an ample fortune.

Bembo hor ch' è giunto à più beata riva
Lo tuo d' esto empio mar felice legno,
E nel ciel tocchi il destinato segno
Ove da pochi à gran pena s' arriva,
Sol duolsi Etruria, che sia ignuda, e priva
D' un sì nobil tesor, sì ricco pegno,
Con temer che non mai truove altro ingegno
Che si dolce d' Amor più canti, o scriva:
Canoro Cigno, che del Tebro all' onde
Lasci cantando le già bianche spoglie,
Ch' ancor del suon n' han gioia ambe le sponde,
Già tua man sacra il serto, e' l premio coglie
D' allori eterni, e non di quelle fronde,
Che ne dà primavera, e 'l verno toglie.

Since Bembo 'twas thy envied lot to gain
The tranquil port of yon celestial shore,
Which, life's tempestuous ocean struggling o'er,
Full blest is he whose frail bark can attain:

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sculpture representing a Naiad sleeping on the grassy brink of a fountain, on the base of which the same lines appear.

"Legebantur" (says Ubaldini, speaking of the works of Angelus Colotius) "in Vaticanâ Bibliothecâ plura ejus epigrammata, et quædam Italica rythmica. Constat etiam quantum laboris impenderit Italicæ linguæ illustrandæ, datis præceptis, confecto vocabulario, &c. . . . . Nisi hanc gloriam Bembus occupâsset, a Colotio hujusmodi beneficium expectandum erat," &c. After discharging for several years his episcopal functions with great propriety, Colotius resigned his bishopric and again retired to Rome: where he survived till the year 1549. *(Vide vit. Angeli Colotii Episc. Nucerini. Auct. Fed. Ubaldino. Romæ,* 1673, *in* 8vo.*)*

ETRURIA mourns disconsolate;—that vein
Of elocution rich, her boast no more;
And asks, who now on wing like thine shall soar,
Or breathe to Love so sweet, so soft a strain:
Melodious SWAN! that near thy Tiber's waves
Hast left thy snowy spoils, with parting lays
That through his vocal banks yet echoing ring;
Henceforth 'tis thine to weave of tuneful leaves
The wreath for ever verdant,—not the bays
Of transient bloom, that wither in their spring.

Cardinal Sadoleto did not long survive his friend Bembus. He died in the month of October following. That same year, says Beccatelli, seemed destined to extinguish the brightest luminaries of Rome; which within one month after the decease of Bembo, was deprived of Signoria Vittoria Colonna, Marchioness of Pescara, who in poetical talents was another Sappho; and in works of piety and charity a second Saint Elizabeth—"che a'giorni nostri in versi è stata un' altra Sapho, & in opere sante & di charità una Santa Elisabetta." Concerning this lady, a Latin poet of the same age cited by Lancelloti, in his sprightly work entitled "L' Hoggidi, overo Gl' Ingegni non inferiori a' passati," makes the following honourable mention:

Parte seconda, p. 191, ediz. Venez. in 2 tom. 8vo. 1684.

PRISCA quid hoc nostro vidêre beatius ævo
Ingenia? ecquæ illis major clementia cœli
Faustiùs arrisit: sed enim satìs ante probatum est
Quid valeant hæc sæc'la viris, at temporis acti
Mirator jactabit adhuc quam mascula Sappho
Præcipuam lyrico tulerit modulamine palmam.
Teque Tanagrææ superatum voce Corinnæ

Pindare, dum quinto inferior certamine cedis.
Huic ego Te objiciam, faustum Victoria! nomen;
Quæ non prisca tuis tantùm muliebria plectris
Plectra silere vales Romanaque Græcaque Thuscis:
Sed (tua quæ virtus propria est) lascivia versus
Commaculat dum nulla tuos, tua Musa maritas
Extinctas flet mœsta faces, lectique jugalis
Sublimem socium mediis interserit astris;
Æternive boni veros suspirat amores.
Tantum sola decus casto fers carmine, quantum
Dedecus obscœno Sapphoque Corinnaque versu.

Why should not ours with former ages vie?
Has Genius found a less auspicious sky,
Thus doom'd to pine in these degenerate days?
—Compell'd you grant our poets equal praise,
But ask, of the soft sex, with manly fire
Who now like Sappho strikes the invigor'd lyre?
Or her, that in the harmonious strife unfoil'd,
Thee, five times, Pindar, of the bays despoil'd?
Victoria! thine the praise, auspicious name!
Tuneful as they, she shines with purer fame:
Silent, abash'd, let Græcia's blushing dames,
And Rome's, admit Etruria's modest claims;
Whether her Muse the nuptial torch deplores
Extinct, or with her consort's spirit soars
(Enthusiast sweet) yon stellar orbs above—
Or rapturous hymns the eternal source of love.
Sappho! Corinna! blush, your strains unchaste,
Where chief she triumphs, speak you most disgrac'd.

GALATEA.

PANA Deum Siculi per iniquas littoris undas,
Eludit tardâ dum GALATEA fugâ;
Seque adeò spe provectus, studioque sequendi,
Plus medium infido tingueret ille mari;
Quò fugis ô GALATEA? mane, mane, ô GALATEA:
Non ego sum, dixit, non ego, Nympha, Cyclops,
Qui flavum avulsis jaculatus rupibus Acin,
Sævitiæ liquit tristia signa suæ.
Pastorum pecorisque Deus, cui garrula cerâ
Prima dedit varios fistula juncta modos;
Quem gelidi frondosa colunt pineta Lycei,
Lætaque Mænalio Parrhasis ora jugo;
Unam de cunctis te diligo Neptuninis:
O GALATEA mane, ô jam GALATEA mane.
Ille loquebatur: fundo declive maligno
Littus erat: gressum non tenuêre pedes.
Sed pelagi dum cœca urget malè cautus, et instat,
Quà refugit pendens, snbtrahiturque solum,
Labitur, et summas dorso converrit arenas:
Labentem intortis obruit unda fretis:
Utque Deam, GALATEA, iterans GALATEA, vocabat,
Implêrunt tenues ora vocantis aquæ.
Tum primùm latices epotavisse marinos
PANA ferunt, ponti nec latuisse Deum:
Sed quia Nereidas ibat vexare puellas,
Offensum fluctus non tenuisse suos.
Ergo illum nandi insuetum glauca excipit alto
Unda sinu: exultant irrequieta vada.
Marmora ter superare manu conatus amara,
Ter circumfusis est revolutus aquis.
Nympha Dei lapsum cupidis spectârat ocellis,
Gratior & pulchro risus in ore fuit.
Spectârant, sparsi ut steterant per littora, Fauni,
PAN, comites Fauni, grataque turba tua,

Et mixtus Faunis, cordi cui semper amores
Nympharum, et querulo tibia rauca sono,
Incubus, et Satyri, & coniferæ Silvanus
Arboris agresti cinctus honore caput.
Qui simul atque ipsum gentis vidêre parentem
PANA sub impuris mergier æquoribus;
Nympha redi, GALATEA redi, neu desere amantem,
Ingeminant omnes: candida Nympha redi.
Ah! tantum ne admisse tuis sit dedecus undis,
Quod taceant nulli pòst GALATEA dies.
Ingeminant Divi: clamoribus icta resultat
Arida pumiceum quà lavit Ætna pedem.
Illa metum fallax simulare, et tendere in altum;
Et vanas surdâ rejicere aure preces:
Quo magis ii tristes mœsti versare querelas,
Et pelagi expertes dicere amore Deos.
Pectora pars pulsare manu, pars currere in undas;
Cedit, & argutos tardat arena pedes.
Omnia quæ obliquo lentè nans respicit ore,
Unaque tot gaudet fallere Nympha Deos.
Utque satìs lusit, certè sat lusimus, inquit,
Successuque mei non caruêre doli.
Atque ità jactatis relegit freta versa lacertis,
Pronaque non longum vincere tendit iter.
Summa secant pulsæ fluctu saliente papillæ:
Spumea sub niveo murmurat unda pede.
Tum summo apprensum cornu sustollit: at illi
Clauserat insolitus lumina victa sopor.
Ut rediit cum luce animus; "Quo percitus œstro
Conjugium affectas," dixit, "inepte, meum?
Perque ausus vada salsa sequi, regna invia vobis,
Invitam pergis sollicitare Deam?
Numen aquæ gaudet tumidarum numine aquarum,
Conveniunt votis vota propinqua meis.
Tu pete montivagas, quarum es de gente, capellas
Parte tui, et nostros linque, proterve, toros."

GALATEA.

FROM PAN, while GALATEA slowly flies,
The God pursues, and hopes to clasp his prize.
His steps alluring o'er the yielding sand,
Where dangerous waters beat Sicilia's strand,
Her native deep the wily nymph regains,
Nor yet his eager chace the deep restrains:
Till half immers'd beneath the treacherous flood,
" Stay Nymph," he cries, " why thus my suit elude!
Stay, GALATEA, stay: repress thy fear:
Nor vainly think the hateful Cyclops near,
Who with rent rocks thy Acis dar'd to wound,
While jealous fury stain'd the reeking ground.—
'Tis PAN pursues,—'tis PAN, whose skill divine
First taught the tuneful reeds with wax to join;
Me, swains on pine-crown'd Mænalus adore,
And cool Lycæus owns my guardian pow'r;
For thee alone of Neptune's train I burn,
Then stay thou, Nymph, and at my suit return."

He said;—abrupt and steep declin'd the shore,
And scarce the slippery bank his footsteps bore;
Yet, where the sly Nymph leads the insidious way,
He treads, with haste that serves but to betray;
Till from his step withdraws the unstable ground,
And gives him sudden to the deep profound.—
Down glides the God,—by envious love beguil'd,
With slime, and sand, his struggling form defil'd;
And on his lips, while " GALATEA" dwells,
His half-form'd voice the eddying water quells.

Then first did PAN, if truth accord with fame,
Drink, in reluctant draughts, the briny stream;
Stern Neptune saw, nor bade his floods refrain
To avenge a sister of the Nereid train.
Unskill'd to swim, the exulting deep receives,
And sportive rolls him in the restless waves;
Yet thrice, the bank he seiz'd, with effort vain,
And thrice, relaps'd into the whelming main.

The struggling God, with joy the Nymph survey'd,
And her fair face a lovelier smile display'd.
His luckless fall, as round the shore they stood,
The gazing Fauns, his own attendants view'd.
Thy fall, O PAN, survey'd that wanton throng,
Whom rape delights, and revelry, and song,
The mingled Satyrs;—and Sylvanus, thou,
Known by the cypress that adorns thy brow.

Their leader's sad mischance they mark with pain,
And, while he struggles with the billowy main,
All hail the Nymph, in tones of anxious grief,
"Haste, GALATEA! haste to his relief!
Return kind Nymph, in pity, to his aid,
Nor leave thy suitor helpless, and betray'd;—
Ah! let not such a crime thy realms disgrace,
Which not the lapse of time can e'er efface."—

Thus they exclaim; the echoing tones rebound,
And distant Ætna thunders back the sound;
Yet still the Nymph, with well-dissembled fear,
Flies to the deep, nor lends a listening ear.—
With added clamours they their voices join,
And tax with cruelty each pow'r marine;
Now beat their breasts in agonizing grief,
Rush to the waves, and tender vain relief;
For still, the treacherous shore beneath their feet
Recedes,—nor can support the incumbent weight.

With secret triumph, as she swims along,
The Nymph obliquely views the anxious throng;
Pleas'd that success her single art hath crown'd,
That one sole pow'r, such numbers can confound;
Then cries, "since victory thus rewards our wiles,
Content we'll end the sport, and break the toils."

She said; and quick to appease their loud alarms
Plied the light oarage of her rosy arms;
While swift the refluent deep her bosom cleaves,
And stems her snowy foot the murmuring waves;
Then rais'd his dripping head, with torpid night
Oppress, nor conscious of the cheerful light.

When slow-returning sense pervades his frame:
Thus she—"ah! why indulge the unequal flame,
Rash power! what frenzy urg'd with aims undue,
'Midst her own realms a sea-nymph to pursue!
To me the fates assign some other spouse,
Some pow'r marine to share my equal vows:—
Hence, let thy native woods thy views restrain,
Nor longer woo a goddess of the main."

MEMOIRS

OF

FRACASTORIUS.

——— O, SI TE COMITEM DENT RURA BEATA
BARDOLENA MIHI! O, QUIS NOS PROPTER AMOENUM
BENACUM, VIRIDI SILVIS IN LITTORE SISTAT:
ATQUE OLEA LAUROQUE TEGAT!

Fracast. ad M. Ant. Flamin. & Galeat. Florimont.

It has been observed, that Fracastor was not an author who wrote for fame. His facility in composition, rendered that a pleasure to him which to many is a toil; and in his converse with the muses especially, he appears to have had little further view than the temporary amusement of himself and his friends. His "Citriorum Epigrammata," and many of his smaller pieces are lost. So indifferent was this author with regard to the fate of his poetical productions, that we are told he seldom

evinced any concern for their preservation. The greater part of such of his poems as have survived to our times, were with difficulty collected together from the various repositories of the learned; and thus rescued from oblivion, merely by the care of individuals who fortunately knew how to appreciate their merits.

Vita Fracastorii operibus ejus præfixa. Venet. 1584, in 4to.

This accomplished scholar was born at Verona, about the year 1484, and descended from a very ancient and honourable family. His father Paulo-Philippus, and the rest of his friends, remarked with pleasure those signs of a promising genius which distinguished the juvenile days of Fracastor; and no expense was spared in his education. Singular circumstances are recorded concerning his birth and infancy. He came into the world with his lips so united, that the knife of the surgeon was requisite to separate them. (*a*) While

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(*a*) Julius Cæsar Scaliger alludes to this incident in the following indifferent epigram:

Os Fracastorio nascenti defuit, ergo
Sedulus attentâ finxit Apollo manu;
Inde hauri, medicusque ingens, ingensque Poeta,
Et magno facies omnia plena deo.

Thus imitated by the Italian poet MARINO:

Al Fracastor nascente
Mancò la bocca, allora il biondo Dio
Con arte diligente
Di sua man gliela fece, e gliel' aprio,
Poi di se gliel' empio.
Quinci ei divin divenne: ed egualmente
Di doppia gloria in un giunse à la meta,
E Fisico, e Pöeta.

his mother, Camilla Mascarellia, was fondling him, yet an infant, in her arms, she was killed by lightening, but he escaped unhurt. In his youth he was sent to prosecute his studies at Padua. Here, not content with superficial acquirements, he manifested an earnest desire to render himself thoroughly master of every science that occupied his attention. His uncommon memory and unwearied application, enabled him to make a singular proficiency in mathematics. Petrus Pomponatius, (*b*) a Man-

Vita Fracastorii supradict.

(*b*) PETRUS POMPONATIUS was born at Mantua, A. D. 1462. He delivered lectures on the philosophy of Aristotle and Averröes, first at Padua, where his pleasing elocution, talents and ingenuity, procured him many hearers. He afterwards removed to the university of Bologna, where he composed his celebrated little treatise in which he has been supposed to call in question the immortality of the soul. "Cucullatos sacerdotes contra se in caput et nominis famam vehementissimè concitavit, edito scilicet volumine, quo animas post corporis mortem interituras, ex sententiâ Aristotelis probare nititur, secutus Aphrodisei placita, cujus dogmate ad corrumpendam juventutem dissolvendamque Christianæ vitæ disciplinam nihil pestilentius induci potuit." *(Jovii Elog.)*

An edition of this book, published *anno* 1534, *in* 12mo. is termed by bibliographers "Liber inter rariores rarissimus," and said to have been publicly burned on account of the atheistical *dogmata* which it contains: but the edition of the above date could not have been the earliest of this work. It moreover bears so modern an appearance, that Maittaire suspects the date to be a false one. *(Annal. Typogr. tom.* ii. *p.* 805.*)* An edition of the same work, apparently published without notice of printer, year, or place, is in the possession of the author of these memoirs. It has the following *colophon:*

"Finis impositus est huic tractatui per me Petrum filium Joannis Nicolai Pomponatii de Mantua die 24 mens. Septembr. Anno Christi 1516, Bononiæ: Anno 4 Pontificatûs Leonis X. *ad laudem individuæ Trinitatis.*" See also *"Vogt. Catal. Historico-Critic. Libror. rarior. ed. nov. accurante Jano Librario in* 8vo. *Hamb.* 1738."

tuan, had the direction of his philosophical studies.

At the university of Padua, Fracastor had for associates and fellow-students, several

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Concerning the same work and its author, the editors of "Nouveau Dictionnaire Historique," (*A Caen* 1789) furnish us with the following additional particulars. "His book "De Immortalitate Animæ," in which he maintains that Aristotle did not believe the immortality of the soul, and that it is capable of being proved only by the Scripture and the authority of the church, was attacked with great vehemence. This sentiment was deemed dangerous. The matter was referred to the arbitration of Bembus, who endeavoured to justify Pomponatius: so that he obtained permission to publish his book anew. Niceron, amongst various others, thus defends Pomponatius. "On est accoutumé à le regarder comme un impie et un athée qui ne songeoit qu' à détruire la Religion Chrétienne; tâchant d' en saper les fondemens par les coups qu' il a portés a l' immortalité de l' ame. Il se peut faire qu' il ait pensé un peu librement sur plusieurs points de la Religion, come le faisoient plusieurs savans de son temps, avec lesquels ce défaut lui étoit commun. Mais ses ouvrages ne font rien voir de cet athéisme prétendu qu' on lui attribue, et pourvu qu' on les lise avec un esprit désinteressé, on reviendra, du moins en partie, de la prévention générale où l' on est à son égard."

Pomponatius thus explains himself in his "Defensorium" on this head: "Si Christus resurrexit, nos resurgemus; si nos resurgemus, anima est immortalis. At Christum verè a mortuis surrexisse scimus ex tantorum et sanctissimorum virorum testimonio, ex ecclesiâ militante. Ergò verè anima est immortalis."

His philosophical works were collected and published at Venice in 1525. He is said to have composed for himself the epitaph which follows:

> Hìc sepultus jaceo. Quare? nescio.
> Nec si scis, aut nescis, curo.
> Si vales, benè est: vivens valui.
> Fortasse nunc valeo:
> Si, aut non, dicere nequeo.

Vanini, whose "Dialogi," as Morhoff observes, "atheismi virus tegunt," &c. was a scholar of Pomponatius.

young men of distinguished rank. Among these were Gaspar Contarenus, who was afterwards created a cardinal by Paul III. Andreas Naugerius; Marcus Antonius Contarenus; all Venetians of high distinction. Joannes Jacobus Bardulonus of Mantua; Pomponius and Lucas Gaurici, brothers, and deeply skilled in astronomy; Joannes Baptista Rhamnusius; and lastly, Marcus Antonius, Joannes Baptista and Rhaymundus Turriani, three brothers, of one of the noblest houses of Verona; with whom, the writings of Fracastor evince that he afterwards maintained a cordial and uninterrupted friendship.

Fracastor continued to reside at Padua; where he probably became a public lecturer in some branch of learning, till war interrupted the tranquility, and ruined the prosperity of that seat of letters. We are told that he was afterwards engaged, at the instance of Livianus, general of the Venetian forces, on terms very honourable to him, to superintend some department of science at an academy in Friuli.(*c*) Here he had a further opportunity of cultivating the friendship of Navagero, and of Joannes Cotta, a gentleman of Legnano, who excelled in poetry, and whom Frascator celebrates in his poems. But there is reason to suppose that in this new situation he did not enjoy

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(*c*) "Academia Forojuliensi ad Portam Naonem, i. e. In "Novale Castella del Trevigiano," according to Maffei. "Academiam in agro Tarvisino ad Portum Naonem instituerat, evocatis in contubernium præcellentibus poetis, in queis longè demum clarissimi (præter Cottam) Fracastorius, Naugerius, et Hieronymus Borgius evasêrunt." (*P. Jovius in Jo. Cottæ Elogio.*)

any lasting tranquillity. We are informed that he accompanied his friend Livianus in several military expeditions. At length this commander having been defeated and taken prisoner in an engagement on the banks of the Adda, Fracastor returned to his native city, and applied himself to the management of his paternal estate, which had suffered greatly in the general devastation.

Bembi Histor. Veneta; Lib. vii. apud. fin.

Fracastor had married during the life-time of his father, and in compliance with his wishes. This marriage was not unproductive; but he had the grief of attending two of his sons to the grave, who were snatched from him by a premature decease. (*d*) He was deprived of a third at a more advanced age. Paulo-Philippus was the only son who survived him. Of him the biographer of Fracastor makes mention as living at Verona in his time, and eminent for his literary qualifications: "quem" (says he) "hodiè Veronæ præclaro florentem ingenio admiramur."

Medicine was the science to which Fracastor devoted his chief attention. His fame as a physician was widely diffused. In the whole course of a practice in which he was eminently successful, gain was with him a secondary and very inferiour concern. It has even been affirmed that he practised entirely without pecuniary reward. To his other acquirements Fracastor added a profound knowledge of natural philosophy and astronomy,

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(*d*) The death of these sons he very pathetically laments, in the verses addressed "ad Joannem Baptistam Turrianum Veronensem."

and in his astronomical treatises, he had the credit of pointing out or elucidating some things which were till then entirely unknown, or very imperfectly understood. (*e*)

The astronomical, critical, and philosophical treatises of Fracastor are enlivened with occasional poems. Several of them are composed in the form of conversations; a species

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(*e*) Scipione Maffei, in the Notizia Letteraria, subjoined to the work entitled "Verona Illustrata," in fol. Veronæ, 1732, has given a summary of the improvements which the philosophy of medicine as well as the science of astronomy, received from the writings of Fracastor. That the telescope was an instrument not entirely unknown to him, Maffei proves in the following words: "All' uso del cannocchiale fece strada fin dal tempo suo l' autore di cui trattiamo, poichè disse nel capo 23 de gli Omocentrici, che riguardando la luna, e le stelle con certi vetri, venivano a parer vicinissime, et non più alte delle torri; e disse nel capo 8: Si quis per duo specilla ocularia perspiciat, altero alteri superposito, majora multo, et propinquiora videbit omnia."

And that a species of microscope also was in use so early as the time of Giovanni Rucellai, who flourished in the pontificate of Leo X. appears, says Maffei, from the following passage in the "Api," a poem of that author:

> "Io già mi posi a far di questi insetti
> Incision per molti membri loro,
> Che chiama Anatomia la lingua Greca;
> E parebbe impossibil s' io narrassi
> Alcuni lor membretti come stanno,
> Che son quasi invisibili a i nostr' occhi."

"E segue dicendo, come si era valso di vetri, i quali tanto ingrandivano, che bambino pur' allor nato parea il colosso di Rodi." Rucellai, a native of Florence, and related to the family of the Medici, was born about the year 1475. He was disappointed in his expectation of ecclesiastical preferment by the death of his patron Leo X. but from Clement VII. obtained the appointment of *Castellano di castel Sant' Angelo*. He died about the fiftieth year of his age.

of writing sanctioned by some of the finest models of antiquity, and much used in these

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Scipione Maffei, in the work before-mentioned, has given some very interesting notices of various of his learned countrymen, who flourished as well in very early periods, as in those distinguished for the revival of learning. The elegance of the following little poem, of a date so remote as the middle of the fifteenth century, which he gives on the authority of an inedited MS. to which he had access, may perhaps be a sufficient apology for its insertion here.

BERNARDINI CILENII VERONENSIS.

Quid fles, o mea lux? quìd madidas genas
Perturbas lacrimis, albaque percutis
Sævis pectora palmis,
Et flavum lanias caput?
Felix Elysium jam nemus aspicit
Frater, Parca truci quem rapuit manu,
Et possessa beatis
Umbris rura perambulat.
Hìc sunt virginei cum cytharis chori,
Hìc est arcitenens cum pharetrâ puer:
Passim lilia, passim
Rubræ cum violis rosæ.
Hæc nos rura manent; hoc nemus incolet
Quisquis perpetuis fervet amoribus;
Quisquis pectore molli
Inclusas aluit faces.
Ergo jam querulis parce doloribus,
Neu mœstis violes funera fletibus:
Vivum, Milphia, vulgus
Plores, si sapias magis.

Ah! cease to weep, let sorrow's storm
No more that blooming cheek deform,
Nor beat that snowy breast, nor tear
With cruel hand thy golden hair.

A flower cut off in early bloom,
Thy brother met his timeless doom;

early periods of the revival of letters. Their titles are borrowed from the names of the speakers. The "De Animâ Dialogus" is denominated "Fracastorius;" the treatise "De Poeticâ," is intituled "Naugerius;" and the books "De Intellectione," have the title of "Turrius." A young man, in the character of a minstrel, who is supposed to be more especially subject to the authority of Naugerius, sings to his lyre the verses that are occasionally introduced. The pretence is merely relaxation from severer thought; and the poems are often unconnected with the main subject.

Fracastor maintained a literary intercourse with many of the most distinguished characters of the times. Besides those already enumerated, Bembo and Flaminio were in the number of his poetical friends. Giovanni Matteo Giberti, bishop of Verona, and Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, with others of the

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Yet still blest youth he lives, he roves,
With happiest shades, the Elysian groves.

He joins amid' that choral throng,
While love presides, the dance, the song;
Where strewn profuse, the violet blows,
The lily pale, the blushing rose.

We too, ere long those joys shall share,
We too—and every faithful pair
Whose bosoms glow with fond desire,
Who nurse like us the secret fire.

Then for the dead, with fruitless woe,
Let no untimely sorrows flow;
Strangers to ties that life endear,
The insensate living claim the tear.

highest rank and station, assiduously cultivated his friendship. To several of these dignified personages we find him addressing various of his poems; to the latter he dedicated some of his medical works.

Averse from the ceremony and tumult of a public life, he had a peculiar predilection for retirement, and passed a great part of his time at his villa in the neighbourhood of Verona. Of this seat, Fracastor's biographer has given us a pleasing description. It was situated in a range of hills about fifteen miles from Verona, between the Athesis, (Adige) and Benacus, (Lago di Garda). "Here," (says he) "after a moderate ascent, is seen the villa of Fracastor, in the midst of a level ground, yet so elevated as to command a view of the lake. The house is plain, and has little to boast from artificial ornament; but much from the natural beauty of its situation. It is of a square form, with an open aspect on every side except the north. On the east, on which part the Adige rolls its rapid current, hastening from the interiour of Germany, and laves the foot of the mountain, it commands a view of Verona; with innumerable villas scattered here and there on the subjacent plain. Herds and flocks grazing add to the picturesque beauty of the scene; which is still heightened by the smoke of the scattered habitations seen most distinctly towards evening. On the west, the appearance of the Lago di Garda, is no less pleasing. Here hills rising in alternate succession meet the view; here the sometimes disturbed and tumultuous billows of the lake;—the charming peninsula of Catullus;—vessels with expanded sails; and fishing-barks

In vita Fracastorii supradict.

seen approaching from a remote distance; and numerous towns and hamlets seated on the sunny promontories. Beneath lies Bardoleno; its declivity crowned with olives and orange-trees; the hilly summits here embrowned with shady woods; there spreading a green and luxuriant pasture. The damp unwholesome winds from the south, are warded off by an orchard of the choicest fruit trees, so arranged as to form a skreen to the villa; while mount Baldo on the north, towering behind, protects it from the rigorous blasts of winter. This delightful retreat possesses therefore a double advantage. In the heat of summer, it is agreeably ventilated by cool and refreshing breezes which temper the fervour of the air;—in winter, it is exposed only to the enlivening rays of the sun, and a clear sky. The Lago di Garda, has in common with the sea this property; it never freezes; and as it were resists and mollifies the severity of winter. Its abundance of fish adds much to its other advantages."

"Such" (says he) "is the mansion furnished with apartments adapted to summer or winter, that so often admitted into its beloved recesses our Girolamo. Here was he accustomed to enjoy the conversation of his friends. Here he found that tranquillity and rural seclusion equally propitious to the muses and to severer studies; and here he produced many of those works which spread his celebrity throughout Europe, and covered his brow with the wreath of fame."

Fracastor himself, in a poetical epistle to one of his friends, agreeably describes the same favourite retreat; and enters into a

pleasing and rational detail of the employments and recreations in which he passed his secluded hours.

AD FRANCISCUM TURRIANUM VERONENSEM.

Turri! si aut mihi villa et lar sit lætior, aut tu
Ferre domum tenuem possis, parvosque Penates
Urbe procul ruri sese abscondentis amici,
Quantum ego te his mecum caphiis in montibus optem,
Montibus his, ubi, si querulæ nemora alta cicadæ
Non rumpant, equidem vix nôrim æstatis adesse
Tempora, tam leni mitescit Julius aurâ.

Sed quid, si est angusta domus, dum pulvere et omni
Munda situ : dum sit nullo turbata tumultu,
Nescia curarum, nullius conscia culpæ :
Alta ubi per totum sit pax, et amica Camœnis
Otia, et integri per magna silentia somni ?
Quid refert, alius minio laquearia rubra
Si inspicere, ipse velim fuligine nigra videre ?
Si non dejectum cœlo Jovis igne Typhoea,
Terrigenasque alios, spirantia signa, videbis
Admirans opus æterni memorabile Iuli,
At bona Libertas aderit, quæ rura beata
Præcipuè insequitur, simplexque incedit et exlex.
Hìc tibi, si paulò digitus sit inunctior, aut si
Potanti insonuit cyathus, vel si pede utroque
Non steteris, nemo objiciet, nemoque sedentem
Arguet, hoc illi si fors superincubuit crus.
Stare, sedere, esse ex libito, et potare licebit.

Forsitan et, mihi quid vitæ, quid sit studiorum,
Nôsse optas, quò vel damnes, vel singula laudes.
Mane venit, juvat Auroram Solemque videre

Nascentem, qui non alio consurgit Eoo
Pulchrior, unde novâ lætantur singula luce,
Et sylvæ, scopulique, et pictis nubibus aër.
Parte aliâ BENACUM alto de colle saluto,
Centum cui virides invergunt flumina Nymphæ:
Ipse sinu magno genitor magno excipit amne.
Tum juvat aut spectare boves mugitibus alta
Complentes nemora, aut pulsas in pascua capras.
Præ caper it, cui barba jubat, cui cornua pendent
Intorta, et grandes ólido de corpore setæ.
Ponè gregem reliquam compellit arundine virgo
Upilio, multo armantur cui baltea fuso.
Interea natos discentes rustica amare
Numina, vicini nemoris gelidam voco in umbram,
Qui libros, qui secum horæ solatia portent.
Hìc legitur, viridique thoro, saxove sedetur
Glandiferâ sub fago, aut castaneâ hirsutâ.
At variæ circum sylvis, et frondibus altis
Assuetæ ludunt volucres, atque æthera mulcent.
Tum densum nemus, atque umbræ per gramina læta
Jejunas nos invitant spatiarier horas.
At fessi hæc inter pueri sitiuntque, dolentque
Plus æquo retineri, et jam Musasque, librosque,
Et Pana, et gelidi pinus odêre Lycæi.
Ergo præcurrêre, et aquas, et vina parârunt
Lucenti in vitro, et flores sparsêre nitentes.
Advenio: primas atro lita mora cruore,
Aut grossi mensas ineunt, cors cætera, et hortus
Sufficit. Interea crebro sonat area pulsu,
Increpitat seges, et duri sub Sole coloni
Alternis terram feriunt, et adorea flagris.
Fit clamor, resonat tellus rupesque propinquæ,
Et paleæ sursum strepitu jactantur inanes:
Læta Ceres alto ridens despectat Olympo.
Umbra diem reliquum, somnus, librique, viæque
Producunt, dum siccam æstu Canis excoquit urbem.
Verùm, ubi cæruleis serus sese extulit undis

Vesper, et in coelum surgentia sidera vexit,
Vicinâ e speculâ magni admirator Olympi,
Altâ rupe sedens natis astra omnia monstro:
Accendoque animos patriæ cœlestis amore.
Illi admirari, et cognoscere sidera discunt,
Cepheaque, Arctonque, et servantem plaustra Böotem.

Hæc ergò præferre urbi, et contemnere magna
Si possis, quid te teneat, ne tu ocyus ad nos
Accurras? etiam has sedes, hæc limina magnus
NAUGERUS subiit, nec dedignatus adire est
BATTUS amor Musarum, ipsum quo tempore primùm
PANA, atque antiquos cecinit TELLURIS amores.

TO FRANCISCUS TURRIANUS OF VERONA.

IF these small Lares any charms afford,
Nor you disdain to grace our humble board,
While far from cities I my footsteps bend,
Here let me prove the endearments of a friend
Mid' CAPHIAN hills, where freshening gales assuage
The noon-tide heat, and calm the dog-star's rage;
But that our groves with chirping insects ring,
I ne'er had mark'd the fleeting lapse of spring.

—What, though my mansion rise not proudly great,
It boasts in neatness, what it wants in state.
Here too, no jars, nor din of noisy arms,
Nor care intrude, nor conscious guilt alarms.
Here peaceful solitude the muse befriends,
Soothes us awake, and on our sleep attends.
What, if my ceiling boast no painted dies,
Nor fear the innoxious dust that round it flies;

If chissel'd by the immortal sculptor's hand,
No busts surprise, nor breathing statues stand;
Here FREEDOM dwells, that loves the rural plains,
And wide expatiates in her own domains;
Here acts, absolv'd from modish fashion's school,
Nor moves in measur'd steps, nor stands by rule;
But drinks at pleasure, and reclines at ease,
No laws to trammel, and no fops to tease.

Perchance, each action free to praise or blame,
Of my lone hours a due account you claim.
Forth from my home at earliest dawn I stray,
And catch the glories of the opening day,
Where Sol's gay beam the face of nature chears,
Who in no scene a lovelier aspect wears.—
Brown woods, and towering cliffs salute his rise,
And rain-bow lustres tinge the illumin'd skies.
—BENACUS next my early notice claims,
His hundred nymphs, and tributary streams:
Pleas'd, I remark his banks with verdure gay,
Where wandering flocks, and lowing oxen stray.—
Here the rough goat, with bearded honours, leads
His unpenn'd followers to the dewy meads:—
The rustic dame each straggler lorn, behind
Compels, nor yet her housewife task resign'd.

Next, taught the sylvan scenery to approve,
I call my offspring to the neighbouring grove;
While each a volume bears of learned lore,
Delightful solace of the winged hour.
Here read, where nature forms a verdant seat,
And beech or chesnut yields a cool retreat;
As flit from bough to bough the aerial throng,
And the woods echo to their varied song.

Now, where deep shades exclude the solar ray,
A lengthen'd walk beguiles the advancing day,

Till my tir'd charge of hunger's call complains,
Whose rage, not Pan, nor the lov'd Muse restrains.
They run before, and with assiduous care,
Pour the pure lymph, the sparkling wines prepare.
The gay board smiles, with flow'rs and fruitage drest,
The coop, and frugal garden yield the rest.

Mean-time, in measur'd strokes the flail resounds,
And with loud echoes from the floor rebounds,—
While mid' the heat the sinewy rustic plies
Alternate labour, and the light chaff flies;
From high Olympus, Ceres marks their toils,
And crowns each effort with benignant smiles.

Light slumbers, skreen'd from sol's oppressive ray,
Or studious converse lengthen out the day.—
These, and the short excursion, please by turns,
While your parch'd city flaming Sirius burns.

When Hesper, rising from the azure main,
Through fields of æther leads his shining train,
The accustom'd cliff, my eager feet ascend,
And his young charge their parent's steps attend,
Thence, widely scattered o'er the blue serene,
I shew the glories of the ethereal scene;
Exalt their youthful aims to heights sublime,
And wake their ardour for the heavenly clime;
While strong desire each glowing breast inflames
To mark their courses, and recount their names.

—Yon city's tumult, and the pride of state
Contemns my friend? such joys on you await.
Ah, why not hasten to these haunts, long prov'd
To friendship sacred, and by virtue lov'd.
Naugerius here in pleasing converse stray'd;
Here our own Baïtus tun'd his sylvan reed,

By every muse belov'd,—an honour'd name;
Here Pan he sung, and Tellus' ancient flame.

Fracastor was fond of music, in which he was a proficient. He was habitually of a thoughtful turn of mind; a man of few words; of the strictest temperance; a remarkable manager of his time, no part of which he suffered to pass unimproved.

In his latter years his attachment to privacy and retirement seemed to increase, and he wished to relinquish the practice of physic, and resign himself to the pleasures of friendship, and the free pursuits of literature. A passage declarative of this disposition occurs among some verses addressed by him to his illustrious friend the bishop of Verona. (*f*)

(*f*) Giovanni Matteo Giberti was born at Palermo; but his father Francesco was a Genoese, and commander of the pope's naval forces. In his youth Giberti distinguished himself in the literary court of Leo X. Clement VII. appointed him bishop of Verona at an early age; but as he was long resident at Rome, or employed on missions of the highest importance to the ecclesiastical state, Piero Caraffi, afterwards Paul IV. was deputed to manage the concerns of his bishopric. At length, in the pontificate of Paul III. Giberti retired to his diocese, where his public and private virtues rendered him an ornament to his station. His palace was always open to men of learning, whether Italians or strangers; and a considerable part of his great revenues was munificently employed in the encouragement of letters. He was a liberal patron of Greek literature. New Greek types were cast at his expense. He employed under his own roof a number of persons in transcribing MSS. and defrayed the charge of publishing several excellent editions of the works of the Greek fathers. (*Maffei.*) This public spirited prelate is deservedly celebrated in the "Galateo" of Casa. He is the subject of the poem of Bembus, entitled "Benacus;" and various other contemporary

AD JO. MATT. GIBERTUM EPISCOPUM VERONENSEM.

NAIADES hoc GIBERTE, tibi Benacides antrum,
Et qui muscoso fons cadit e lapide
Sacravêre ; tibi sit cura et fontis et antri :
Et quandoque Deus(*g*) ad tua sacra veni.

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poets have paid him the tribute of praise which he so well merited. The works of Giberti with his life, appear to have been published *Veronæ*, 1733, and *Hostiliæ*, 1736.

(*g*) The "productio syllabæ brevis, in cæsurâ," is a license of which the ancients evidently made most frequent use in Heroic verse. Messrs. de Port-Royal have adduced an instance of it in the following Sapphic of Ausonius:

"Tertius horum mihi non magister :"

and in this Phaleucian of Statius :

"Quo non dignior has subit habenas."

We also read, *Horat. Carm. Lib.* iii. *ode* v. *v.* 17.

"Si non periret immiserabilis,"

Upon which Sanadon has the following remark : "On pourroit croire que le Pöete a mis ici un iambe au troisiéme pied, ce qui étoit assez ordinaire chez les Grecs : mais comme les Latins n' ont pas reçu toutes les libertés de la Pöesie Grecque, & que celle-ci ne se trouve ni dans Stace, ni dans Prudence, j' aime mieux dire qu' Horace a allongé ici la derniere sillabe de *periret*, à cause qu' elle se trouve en césure. Aussi est-ce la seule fois qu' il a emploié cette licence dans le verse Alcaique." *(Les Pöesies d' Horace, avec des remarques, &c. tom.* iii. *p.* 294, *a Paris*, 1756, *in* 12mo.*)*

It rarely occurs in pentameter verse, and perhaps no writer on the laws of Latin metrical composition has adduced an indisputable classical instance of it. Tibullus indeed has two examples which seem to authorise the use of such a license here also. The first occurs, *Oper. Lib.* i. *Eleg.* vii. *v.* 72.

"Quidquit agat sanguis est tamen illa tuus."

Et sacer est, et habet spirantes suaviter auras
Hortus: et est nullo gratior umbra loco:
Et nusquam est longæva mage, et felicior arbos
Pulcher Adoni tua; pulcher Apollo, tua.
Hìc canere, et tenuem posse exercere Camoenam
Ille dedit: sanctus qui mihi semper erit.
Hìc herbas, succosque tuos, artemque relinquo
Phœbe: soles Musas tu quoque amare magis.

For thee the Nymphs this sacred Grot
Have built: to thee its streams resign,
Its oozy arch with moss o'ergrown,
Their hands arrang'd, they call'd it thine.

Then let the place thy kind regard
Obtain: thy frequent presence share:
Thy temple own: for thee the shrine
We deck; for thee the rites prepare.

Within this garden's hallowed bound
Gay flow'rets that perennial bloom,
With fragrant incense scent the gale,
Diffusing wide a rich perfume.

Lo! where to form a grateful shade,
Commingling trees their boughs entwine;

Consult however Broukhusius, in his note on this passage. The second instance is found in *Lib.* ii. *Eleg.* iv. *v.* 38.

"Fecit ut infamis hic Deus esset Amor."

Such a license is notwithstanding frequently used in the structure of the pentameter by Fracastor and other poets of his age, by whom perhaps, the strict laws of Latin metrical composition had not as yet been precisely ascertained.

In no lov'd site such verdure crowns
Phœbus! thy tree: Adonis! thine.

Here given to tune my slender reed,
PÆAN! I leave the healing lore;
Thy potent herbs, and skill resign:—
Even THOU too lov'st the Muses more.

Fracastor died August, 1553, of an apoplexy with which he was seized as he sat at dinner, in his villa of Incaffi before described.

Statues of brass were erected at Padua to the memory of this celebrated scholar, and of his friend Andreas Naugerius, (*h*) in a situa-

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(*h*) ANDREAS NAUGERIUS a Venetian of patrician rank, was born A. D. 1483. He acquired the rudiments of Latin literature from M. Ant. Cocceius Sabellicus, a professor of that language at Venice. He studied Greek at Padua, under Marcus Musurus, a Cretan. To his own superiour taste and judgment he was indebted for that appropriate selection of terms and that accuracy of style which characterise his Latin compositions: and of which his funeral elogies on Livianus the Venetian general, and the prince of Loretto, are distinguished instances. A like fastidiousness (as it were) of discrimination, led him to reject in his own epigrams, compositions in which he excelled, the keen and pungent close which Martial generally affects, and to imitate the delicacy and sweetness of Catullus: "adeò Martiali severus hostis, ut quotannis, stato die Musis dicato, multa ejus volumina, tanquam impura, cum execratione Vulcano dicarentur." He cultivated Italian poesy in his youth, with equal success. Naugerius attended his friend Livianus in some of his military expeditions, partly with a view to relieve himself by this active mode of life from indisposition brought on by too close application to his studies. Ever anxious to promote the interests of his country, he sustained the character of her ambassador to Charles V. when the Italian states began to take the alarm at that monarch's apparent projects of aggrandisement. Having afterwards been deputed on a like mission to Francis I. too great solicitude

tion much frequented by the students and professors of the university; that they might

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to fulfil the object of his mission, was perhaps fatal to him. After travelling with great speed to France, he had scarce paid his respects to the monarch, when seized with a fever at Blois, he died A. D. 1529, in his forty-sixth year. *(Vid. Jovium in Elogiis.)*

When this scholar was nominated by the senate of Venice historiographer of his native country, though only in the thirty-second year of his age, he was deemed the most elegant writer of Latin that Italy could boast. Foscarini *(della Letteratura Veneziana)* cites an interesting passage of the decree *(dello Consiglio di Dieci)* on this occasion, which bears date 30 *di Gennajo* 1515: and adds, that Navagero having composed ten books of his history, carried the MS. with him, in his embassy to France, in the discharge of which he ended his days. It was committed by his own hands to the flames, a few hours before his death; but whether in the delirious paroxysm of a fever, or with cool deliberation, is not fully ascertained. Foscarini thinks it was a deliberate act, many of his poems having shared a like fate, confessedly because they fell short of that standard of excellence which he had formed in his own mind; or had been composed after models which he deemed ill chosen. Witness his epigram entitled

VOTA ACMONIS VULCANO.

Has, Vulcane, dicat SILVAS tibi villicus Acmon:
Tu sacris illas ignibus ure, pater.
Crescebant ductâ e Statii propagine SILVIS:
Jamque erat ipsa bonis frugibus umbra nocens.
Ure simul SILVAS: terrâ simul igne solutâ
Fertilior largo foenore messis eat.
Ure istas: Phrygio nuper mihi consita colle
Fac, pater, a flammis tuta sit illa tuis.

(Vide Carm. A. Naugerii Oper. p. 191. *Patav.* 1718, *in* 4to.*)*

But let us hear the testimony of "il Cardinal Valiero" on this head, "*nella sua grande opera inedita,*" cited by Foscarini in the work above-mentioned, p. 251, note 77.

"Accidit Navagerio res, quæ vobis (parla a' suoi nipoti) et Venetis omnibus dolorem pariet. Nam quum ei Decem-

serve as continual mementos of these distinguished persons, and incentives to the pursuit

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virûm jussu onus esset injunctum conscribendæ Historiæ Rerum Venetarum, tantâ vi morbi agitatus est, ut quod plerisque acutis morbis laborantibus solet accidere, mentis inops effectus, Historiam a se perbellè contextam eodem ipso, quo expiravit, die suis manibus in ignem projectam cremaret. Fuerunt qui dicerent, sic de suâ Historiâ judicâsse Navagerium, quia mediocri laude non erat contentus, quia acerrimo præstabat ingenio, quia suis scriptis, etsi omnibus satisfaciebat, sibi tamen satisfacere non consueverat." *(De Util. cap. ex. reb. gest. Venet. Lib.* x. *cap.* ix. *p.* 440. *Mss. n.* xxxvi.*)*

The Latin poems of Naugerius at present extant are few in number, but the exquisitely polished and classical manner in which they are finished, has peculiarly recommended them to the esteem of his learned countrymen.

Several of his epigrams have been selected for imitation in the Italian language, by writers of the most approved credit. His beautiful verses, entitled "Invitatio ad amænum Fontem," gave occasion to the no less beautiful sonnet of Luigi Tansillo, which follows; and serves to evince the close alliance which as we have before observed, was considered to exist between these two species of poetical composition:

E FREDDO è il fonte, e chiare, e crespe ha l' onde:
E molli erbe verdeggian d' ogn' intorno:
E 'l platano co i rami, e 'l salce, e l' orno
Scaccian Febo, che 'l crin talor ci asconde:
E l' aura appena le più lievi fronde
Scuote, sì dolce spira al bel soggiorno:
Ed è 'l rapido Sol sul mezzo giorno:
E versan fiamme le campagne bionde.
Fermate sovra l' umido smeraldo,
Vaghe NINFE, i bei piè, ch' oltra ir non ponno;
Sì stanche, ed arse al corso, ed al Sol siete.
Darà ristoro alla stanchezza il sonno;
Verde ombra, ed aura refrigerio al caldo:
E le vive acque spegneran la sete.

(Oper. Naugerii suprad. p. 288.*)*

Naugerius was distinguished for his skill in Greek litera-

of literary eminence. A similar testimony of respect was paid to their illustrious countryman, by the citizens of Verona, where a statue was erected to his memory, with the following inscription:

HIERONYMO FRACASTORIO PAULLI PHILIPPI F.
EX PUBLICA AUCTORITATE ANNO MDLIX.

Fracastor's death was lamented in an ode with which Joannes Baptista Amaltheus honoured his memory. His biographer has recorded the following verses of Adamus Fumanus on the same subject:

LONGE vir unus omnium doctissimus,
VERONA per quem non MARONES MANTUÆ,

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ture. He was an especial admirer of Pindar, whose works he more than once transcribed with his own hand. It is to Aldus Manutius that we owe this information. *(Vide Epist. ejus ad Naugerium.)* In no point of view does Naugerius appear with greater interest than in his intercourse with Aldus. He was a zealous encourager of that learned printer's labours; and by his exhortations the latter was principally induced to persevere in them under great difficulties and discouragements. He diligently revised, and by a comparison of various MSS. corrected the texts of Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Quintilian, and especially of Cicero, and the assistance which Aldus derived from his critical skill was such as the learned must always gratefully acknowledge. In inscribing to Naugerius by a most interesting preface, the volume which comprizes the Rhetorica Ciceronis, printed *Venetiis, anno* 1514, *in* 8vo, Aldus testified the high sense which he entertained of these obligations; and of all his learned dedicatory epistles, none perhaps is capable of affording the reader more ample gratification.

A life of Naugerius, written with great eloquence by Vulpius, is prefixed to the before-mentioned edition of his works, printed *Patavii*, 1718, *in* 4to. which is one of the most splendid productions of the *Comini* press.

Nec nostra priscis invident jam sæcula,
Virtute summam consecutus gloriam,
Jam grandis ævo, hìc conditur FRACASTORIUS.
Ad tristem acerbæ mortis ejus nuncium
Vicina flevit ora; flêrunt ultimæ
Gentes, periisse musicorum candidum
Florem, optimarum et lumen artium omnium.

VERONA's offspring, happy in whose praise,
MANTUA! she envies not thy VIRGIL's bays,
While to her wondering ken, his glowing page
Recals the beauties of the Augustan age,
With weight of glory, and of years opprest,
Here sleeps FRACASTOR! here his ashes rest!
Fame speaks;—surrounding realms his loss deplore,
Nor unlamenting hears each distant shore:
All mourn the man whom all acknowledg'd long
The light of science, and the flower of song.

Perhaps the productions of no modern poet have been more commended by the learned, than those of Fracastor. His poems are in general written with a spirit which never degenerates into insipidity. But on his "Syphilis" the high poetical reputation of Fracastor is principally founded. Sannazarius on reading this poem, declared that he thought it superior to any thing produced by himself, or his learned contemporaries. From this celebrated performance the reader is presented with a short extract, wherein the author allegorically alludes to the cause of that disease which is the subject of the poem, agreeably to the notion then prevalent, that it was the effect of an impure atmosphere; and ingeniously

points out the specific found efficacious in arresting its baneful progress.

Ilceus, an inoffensive inhabitant of the pastoral scenes of Syria, afflicted with a malady of which he knows neither the cause nor the cure, prays for relief to the rural deities, and especially to Callirhöe, the nymph who is supposed to preside over a fountain remarkable for the medicinal and salubrious qualities of its waters. Ilceus has just concluded his invocation, and the poem thus proceeds :

Fracastorii Syphilis. Lib ii. v. 284 et seqq.

——————— Sic fatus, ut æstu
Fessus erat, viridi desedit graminis herbâ.
Hìc Dea, vicino quæ sese fonte lavabat,
Callirhoe liquido ex antro per lubrica musco
Saxa fluens, juveni dulci blandita susurro,
Lethæum immisit somnum, sparsitque sopore
Gramineâ in ripâ, & salicum nemus inter opacum :
Atque illi visa est sacro se flumine tollens
In somnis coram esse : piâ & sic voce loquuta.
" Ilceu in extremo Diis tandem audite labore,
Cura mei, tibi nulla salus quàcunqûe videt Sol
Speranda est terram magnam super. Hoc tibi pœnæ
Dat Trivia, & precibus Triviæ exoratus Apollo,
Ob sacrum jaculo percussum ad flumina Cervum,
Et nostris affixa tibi capita horrida truncis.
Nam postquam illa feram exanimem per gramina vidit
Abscisso capite, & sacro sparsa arva cruore,
Omnibus ingemuit sylvis, dirumque precata est
Authori. Oranti Latöus tanta sorori
Affuit : & pestem misero immisère nefandam
Durus uterque tibi : quin & quàcunque videt Sol,
Interdixit opem. Quare tellure sub imâ,
Siqua salus superest, cæcà sub nocte petenda est.
Est specus arboribus tectum, atque horrore verendum
Vicinâ sub rupe, Jovis quà plurima sylva

Accubat, & raucum reddit coma cedria murmur.
Huc, ubi se primis Aurora emittet ab undis,
Ire para: & nigrantem ipsis in faucibus agnam
Mactato supplex, atque Ops tibi maxima, dic, hanc,
Dic, ferio. Nigram tum noctem, umbrasque silentes,
Umbrarumque Deos, ignotaque numina Nymphas
Et Thyâ venerare, atræ & nidore cupressi.
Hic tibi narranti causam, auxiliumque vocanti
Haud aberit Dea, quæ cæcæ in penetralia terræ
Deducat te sancta, & opem tibi sedula præstet.
Surge age: nec vani speciem tibi concipe somni.
Illa ego sum, quæ culta vago per pinguia fonte
Dilabor, Dea vicinis tibi cognita ab undis."
Sic ait: & se cæruleo cita condidit amne.

Ille autem, ut placidus cessit sopor, omina lætus
Accipit: & Nympham precibus veneratur amicam.
" O! sequor, O! quòcunque vocas, pulcherrima fontis
Vicini Dea Callirhoe." Tum postera primùm
Exurgens Aurora, suos ubi protulit ortus,
Monstratum Jovis in sylvâ sub rupibus altis
Antrum ingens petit, & nigrantem tergora primo
Vestibulo sistit pecudem, magnæque trementem
Mactat Opi: tibique, inquit, ego hanc Ops maxima macto.
Tum Noctem, noctisque Deas, ignota precatur
Numina: jamque simul Thyan, atramque Cupressum
Urebat: quum vox terræ revoluta cavernis
Longè audita sacras Nympharum perculit aures:
Nympharum, quibus æra solo sunt condita curæ.
Extemplò commotæ omnes, ac cœpta reponunt,
Sulfureos fortè ut latices, & flumina vivi
Argenti, mox undè nitens concresceret aurum,
Tractabant, gelidoque prementes fonte coquebant.
Centum ignis spissi radios, centum ætheris usti,
Bis centum concretorum terræque, marisque
Miscuerant, nostros fugientia semina visus.

At Lipare, Lipare, argenti cui semina & auri
Cura data, & sacrum flammis adolere bitumen,

Continuò obscuræ latebrosa per avia terræ
Ilcea adit, firmansque animum sic incipit ipsa:
ILCEU (namque tuum nec nomen, nec mihi labes
Ignota est, nec quid venias) jam corde timorem
Exue: nequicquam non te hùc charissima mittit
CALLIRHOE; tibi parta salus tellure sub imâ est.
Tolle animos: & me per opaca silentia terræ
Insequere; ipsa adero, & præsenti numine ducam.
Sic ait: & se antro gradiens præmittit opaco.
Ille subit, magnos terræ miratus hiatus,
Squallentesque situ æterno, & sine lumine vastas
Speluncas, terramque meantia flumina subter.
Tum LIPARE: hoc quodcunque patet, quam maxima terra est,
Hunc totum sine luce globum, loca subdita nocti,
Dii habitant: imas retinet Proserpina sedes:
Flumina supremas: quæ sacris concita ab antris
In mare per latas abeunt resonantia terras.
In medio dites Nymphæ, genera unde metalli,
Ærisque, argentique, aurique nitentis origo:
Quarum ego nunc ad te miserans ipsa una sororum
Advenio, illa ego, quæ venas per montis hiantes,
CALLIRHOE haud ignota tuæ, fumantia mitto
Sulfura. Sic ibant terrâ, & caligine tecti,
Jamque exaudiri crepitantes sulfure flammæ,
Conclusique ignes, stridentiaque æra caminis.
Hæc regio est latè variis ubi fœta metallis,
Virgo ait, est tellus, quorum vos tanta cupido
Exercet, superas cœli qui cernitis auras.
Hæc loca mille Deæ cæcis habitamus in antris:
Nocte Deæ & Tellure satæ, queis munera mille,
Mille artes. Studium est aliis deducere rivos:
Scintillas aliis rimari, & sparsa per omnem
Semina tellurem flammarum, ignisque corusci
Materiam miscent aliæ: massamque coercent
Obicibus, multâ & gelidarum inspergine aquarum.
Non procul eruptis fumantia tecta caminis

Ætnæi Cyclopes habent, versantque, coquuntque
Vulcano stridente, atque æra sonantia cudunt.
Læva hæc abstrusum per iter via ducit ad illos:
Dextera sed sacri fluvii te sistet ad undam,
Argento fluitantem undam, vivoque metallo:
Unde salus speranda. Et jam aurea tecta subibant,
Rorantesque domos spodiis, fuligineque atrâ
Speluncas variè obductas, & sulfure glauco.
Jamque lacus latè undantes, liquidoque fluentes
Argento juxta astabant, ripasque tenebant.
Hìc tibi tantorum requies inventa laborum,
Subsequitur LIPARE, postquam ter flumine vivo
Perfusus, sacrâ vitium omne reliqueris undâ.
Sic fatur: simul argenti ter fonte salubri
Perfundit: ter virgineis dat flumina palmis
Membra super: juvenem toto ter corpore lustrat.

HE said; and near the welling fount reclin'd,
To its green verge his fainting limbs consign'd.
CALLIRHOE hears, as in her mossy caves
Glittering with lucid springs, the Goddess laves:
She bids her stream, that murmurs as it flows
O'er the bright pebbles, soothe him to repose,
Deepens the gloom, and deigns herself to shed
Oblivious slumbers round his drooping head:
Then soft emerging from the sacred stream,
Him thus address'd conspicuous in his dream:
"O ILCEUS! doom'd a weight of woes to bear,
"Yet dear to Gods, and my peculiar care,
"Hope no relief,—expos'd to Phœbus' sight
"Where earth's wide surface hails his golden light;
"Health he denies, by DIAN's prayer deterr'd,
"Who mourns the monarch of her widow'd herd,

" Slain by thy hand, no more at large he roves,
" Since his proud antlers deck these hallow'd groves:
" Trivia descried her favorite's gory wound,
" She saw his sever'd honours stain the ground,
" And soon her tears, and agonizing cries
" Mov'd to revenge the Pow'r that rules the skies.
" His angry shafts atone Diana's grief,
" He wing'd the pest, 'tis he denies relief.

" Then far remote from Sol's resplendent ray,
" Beneath his influence, and these scenes of day,
" If health remain, expect the precious aid,
" From Night's deep caverns and the realms of shade.
" Where nods tremendous many a tree of Jove,
" And many a cedar fills yon stately grove,
" 'Mid deepest glooms, with murmuring horrors crown'd,
" A rocky cave expands its jaws profound.
" Against the morrow, let thy early care
" A tender lamb of sablest fleece prepare.—
" Even in the entrance shall the victim fall,
" Be thine on Ops, with solemn rites to call,
" Dread Pow'r! nor less to Night, and silent shades,
" And Nymphs unknown that haunt the darkling glades,
" Let od'rous cypress feed the crackling flames,
" And richest incense rise in cloudy steams.
" So shall thy prayers and offerings duly paid
" Excite a favouring Goddess to thy aid.
" Be her's, to guide thee through the dark recess,
" And with ambrosial health thy wishes bless.
" Haste, 'tis a well known voice that bids thee rise,
" Nor think illusions mock thy slumbering eyes;
" 'Tis I, the Nymph, that near this verdant mead,
" Haunt the clear fount, and pour the bright cascade."

She said;—and sunk beneath the azure waves.
The awakening youth the welcome voice perceives,

Nor heedless of the kindly-omen'd dream,
Adores the beauteous Goddess of the stream.
Then said, " the grateful summons we obey,
" And follow where CALLIRHOE points the way."

And now, in light's perspicuous vest array'd,
The orient morn her shining car display'd,
When early sought the youth the umbrageous wood,
And near the cave the trembling victim stood.
Then he, " on OPS, tremendous Pow'r ! I call,
" And bid to thee, this sable victim fall."
Nor less, to NIGHT, dread Queen ! and silent shades,
And Pow'rs that haunt, unseen, the secret glades,
With fragrant cypress feeds the crackling flames,
While cloudy odours rise in curling steams,
And speaks the suppliant prayer, whose hollow sound
Pervades the deep recesses of the ground :—
Heard by the Nymphs that tend the brazen mine
Sulphureous,—or the silver mass refine,
Or thence precipitate the golden ore,
And cool, with chymic art, the shining store :
Each startled Pow'r the imperfect process stays,
Where denser fires, and æther's subtlest rays,
Earth, water, air—their pregnant forms unite
In mystic compound, baffling human sight.

But LIPARE, whose hands, with nicest care,
The apportion'd elemental seeds prepare
Of future wealth—that unconcocted shine,
And with bright flames the melting mass combine,
Straight, from the cavern's deep recess appears,
And thus the youth with gentle accents chears.

" ILCEUS ! for not unknown thy name, thy grief,
" Nor ceaseless mourn, nor doubt the wish'd relief,
" Dismiss thy fears, for hither not in vain
" CALLIRHOE sends the promis'd boon to gain.

" Attend my steps, while I securely lead
" Through downward paths of ever-during shade."

She said, and pierc'd the gloom; the youth obeys,
And wond'ring treads the labyrinthine ways,
Where endless mists exclude the cheerful light,
And rivers gliding lave the realms of night.

Then she—" These caverns spacious and profound,
" The vast Earth hides within her concave bound.
" Night, and her kindred powers, these dark domains
" Command; the lowest Proserpine retains;
" But nearest day, the River-gods preside,
" Who from their antres pour the sounding tide;
" While in the midst, we rule the richer mine,
" And teach the metal's sparkling ore to shine.
" Lo I, a sister of the alchemic train,
" Lead through the mountain-steep the glittering vein;
" My guiding hand sulphureous vapours own,
" And to CALLIRHOE well my pow'r is known."

Thus wrapt in night, they urge their downward way,
Till the rich haunts sulphureous steams betray,
Where liquid ores diffuse a livid light,
And secret fires metallic waves excite.
" And this the region, these the abodes profound,"
The virgin cried, " where shining ills abound.
" For these, your mortal race of upper air,
" Insatiate burn, and toil with ceaseless care.
" A thousand deities here shun the light,
" Virgins, from Tellus sprung, and aged Night.
" Here, in unnumber'd ways their skill employ'd,
" Some teach the rich metallic stream to glide;
" Some from earth's womb the ethereal spark require
" That all pervades—and trace the secret fire;
" With circling bands the furnace some defend:
" Some with cool lymph the chymic process tend.

" Nor distant far, the Ætnean Cyclops shroud
" Their gloomy caves in night's perpetual cloud;
" And while eternal smoke the place surrounds,
" The fierce flame hisses, and the anvil sounds.
" Thither, in secret leads the left-hand way;
" The right shall to the sacred stream convey:
" Metallic stream, whose living waves, that flow
" With lucid silver, life and health bestow."
She said, and to her guest the region shew'd
Where treasur'd heaps in bright profusion glow'd,
And boundless vaults the glittering stores contain'd,
Their gloomy round with livid sulphur stain'd.

Now seen the lake, whose undulations, bright
With silvery gleams, arrest their dazzled sight;
With nearer steps the shining brink they gain;
And, " here a speedy cure awaits thy pain,"
The Nymph subjoin'd;—" within this argent wave
" Thrice dipt, thy limbs shall all defilement leave."—
Then thrice immers'd, and thrice around his head,
The Nymph divine the silver liquid shed;
And thrice her fair hand, with lustrations due,
O'er all his form the vivid metal threw.

When the Emperor Charles V. going on a certain expedition, happened to pass by Peschiera, with a numerous and splendid retinue; among the concourse of spectators assembled on this unusual occasion Fracastor was pointed out to the monarch, who instantly stopped, more particularly to notice a person whom rumour had celebrated in terms of such uncommon praise.

Vita Fracast. supradict.

We find a solitary Italian poem of Fracastor, preserved in a scarce volume, entitled, " Rime di Diversi Nobilissimi, et Eccellen-

tissimi Autori: " 8vo. printed *in Venetia*, 1550.

DI M. GIROLAMO FRACASTORO.

Questi bianchi papaver, queste nere
Viole Alcippo dona
Al Sonno, e tesse una gentil corona
Per lo soccorso, che sua Donna chere.
Langue Madonna, e ne begliocchi suoi
Sonno ti chier, che ristorar la puoi;
Placido Sonno solo
D' ogni fatica, e duolo
Pace, e del mondo universal quiete,
Te ne' l ombra di Lethe
Creò la Notte, e empio
Di dolcezza, e d' oblio
D' ogni cura noiosa, e d' ogni male,
Tu dove spieghi l' ale
Spargi rorido gelo,
Che gli affanni, e le doglie
D' ombre soavi invoglie,
E copri d' un ameno, e dolce velo.
Tu per tranquilli mari, e lieti fiumi
Per le selve, e per dumi
Acqueti gli animali,
Et a tutti e mortali
Lievi 'l pensier, & il lor fascio grave,
Solo la Donna mia pace non have.

For Sleep,—this poppy's snowy flower
With purple hyacinths combine,
To lure him to thy Lady's bower,
Alcippus! thou the wreath entwine.

Those eyes, in sickness bright, implore
His aid,—he only can restore.

O fraught with balm for every woe,
The kind, mellifluous boon supply!
To bid the tear forget to flow,
And soothe to peace the sufferer's sigh
'Tis thine;—and well affliction knows
The blessings of endear'd repose.

Bland child of Night! from Lethe's bourne
Thou com'st to weave the oblivious veil,
And on the wretched and forlorn
Can'st bid the dear illusion steal;
In dim suffusion wont to fling
The freshness of thy dewy wing.

Even now, mild power! thy sway pervades
The calm recesses of the main,
To stillness charms the leafy glades,
And lulls each mortal care and pain;
Yet deigns, regardless of our prayer,
No respite to the suffering fair.

ANDREÆ NAUGERII

Invitatio ad amœnum fontem.

Et gelidus fons est, et nulla salubrior unda,
Et molli circum gramine terra viret;
Et ramis arcent soles frondentibus alni,
Et levis in nullo gratior aura loco est:
Et medio Titan nunc ardentissimus axe est;
Exustusque gravi sidere fervet ager.
Siste, viator, iter: nimio jam torridus æstu es;
Jam nequeunt lassi longiùs ire pedes.
Accubitu languorem, æstum aurâ, umbrâque virenti,
Perspicuo poteris fonte levare sitim:

INVITATION TO A FOUNTAIN.

Cool is this fount, and pure its current flows,
Its grassy margin woos thee to repose!
Soft wave these alders,—here the freshening breeze
Shall gently fan thee as thou liest at ease:
See—Titan flames from yon meridian skies;
Parch'd is the yellow mead,—the flow'ret dies:
Long hast thou toil'd beneath his sickening ray,
Thy feet implore a respite from the way;
Rest shall re-nerve thy limbs,—thy fever's rage
The breeze and leafy shade,—thy thirst this spring assuage.

DI MESSER ANDREA NAVAGERO.

Begli occhi, ove Amor regna, & onde tira
Mille strali pungenti nel mio petto,
Fia mai, che dimostriate un dolce affetto
Al cor mio fido, che per voi sospira ?

Chiari specchi, ne' quai si scorge, e mira
Di questa nostra età l' honor perfetto,
Quando verrà, che lieto il mesto aspetto
Miri in voi chi per voi Amor martira ?

Serene stelle, a cui sovente sole
Volgersi la mia stanca navicella,
Verrà mai di condurla in porto l' hora ?

Almi Soli più chiari assai che 'l Sole ;
La vostra luce oltra le belle bella
Deh lucerà per me prima ch' io mora ?

Bright eyes, where Cupid sits enthron'd, and aims
A thousand pungent arrows at my breast,
Shall e'er one glance, soft pity's mild behest
Console the constant heart your power inflames ?

Clear mirrours, where exulting in her claims,
Perfection views her image fair exprest,
Will ye reflect less sad, the semblance blest
Of him who droops a martyr to your beams ?

Ye stars serene, by whose resplendent light
My bark forlorn her course is wont to steer,
Say, may she hope her haven to descry?

Suns, that transcend the sun's effulgence bright,
Your rays, whose lustre is beyond compare,
Ah! shall they shine for me, before I die?

MEMOIRS

OF

MARCUS ANTONIUS FLAMINIUS.

Umbræ frigidulæ! arborum susurri!
Antra roscida! discolore picta
Tellus gramine! fontium loquaces
Lymphæ! garrulæ aves! amica Musis
Otia!—O mihi si volare vestrum
In sinum superi annuant benigni!
Ad agellum suum.

Ye cooling shades! thou darkling grove!
Dew-sprinkled antres! warbling bowers!
Streamlets that murmur as ye rove!
And verdant fields, and breathing flowers!
Calm leisure, friendly to the Muse!
To you, the wistful bard aspires,
And gladly bounds his fond desires
To pastoral haunts, and rural views.

MARCUS ANTONIUS FLAMINIUS, a native of Imola in Romagna, was born about the year 1493. Joannes Antonius Flaminius, his father, was a respectable poet, and distin-

guished himself as a writer both in verse and prose. The son imbibed in early youth a taste for polite literature. He not only excelled amongst the Italians as a poet, but was esteemed a very great proficient in the different branches of philosophy : and his abilities, which are said to have resembled in kind, surpassed in degree, those which had distinguished his father. In short, he has by some been pronounced the best poet of his time, and the ornament of the age in which he lived.

Above all, he is commended for his excellent moral qualities, and the conciliating gentleness of his disposition.(*a*) He is said to have been partial to the doctrines of Luther, which in his time began to spread in Germany; and he did not on this account escape the jealousy and secret censures of his more rigid brethren. But it does not clearly appear, whether the charge had any other grounds than that he disapproved of all violence in support of the doctrines of the catholic church, and wished them rather to be recommended and vindicated by calm argument, and an exemplary conduct.

The following epigram, composed on the martyrdom of Savonarola, whose character and conduct, notwithstanding the degrading circumstances that attended his public execution, have been defended and censured with

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(*a*) Several letters of Flaminio, which place the writer's moral and religious character in an amiable light, may be found in the collection entitled " Lettere Volgari di diversi nobilissimi uomini, &c. *apud Aldi Filios. Venetiis,* 1551, *in* 8vo."

equal warmth, does honour to Flaminio's philanthropy and religious moderation.

Dum fera flamma tuos, Hieronyme, pascitur artus,
Relligio, sacras dilaniata comas,
Flevit, et ô! dixit, crudeles parcite flammæ,
Parcite, sunt isto viscera nostra rogo.

When frenzied zealots light the penal fires,
And Jerome writhes in tortures, and expires,
Religion weeps;—barbarians cease! she cries,
Religion suffers,—'tis herself that dies.

Flaminio probably born to no ample patrimony, experienced the protection and liberality of Cardinal Alexander Farnese, (*b*) nephew of Paul III. who is represented as one of the most enlightened and virtuous characters of his time, and the friend of literature and learned men. We find our poet expressing his gratitude, and paying him the tribute of praise, which in this instance cannot be deemed flattery, in several of his Latin poems.

(*b*) Alexander Farnese, born A. D. 1520, was eldest son of Pietro Lodovico Farnese, duke of Parma. Clement VII. appointed him bishop of Parma when he was no more than fourteen years of age. He successively obtained other preferments; and at length was made dean of the sacred college. Charles V. is said on this occasion to have declared, that if all the members resembled Farnese, it would be the most august assembly in the world. After various public employments he retired to Rome, and there lived in dignified splendour, the acknowledged protector of letters. His death happened in 1589. *(Nouveau Dictionnaire Historique. Ed.* 7me. *in* 8vo. *à Caen, &c.* 1789.*)*

From one of these we infer, that the villa which had formerly been the favourite residence of his father, having by some mischance fallen into other hands, was restored to the son by the munificence of Farnese.

AD AGELLUM SUUM.

VENUSTE agelle, tuque pulchra villula,
Mei parentis optimi
Olim voluptas, et quies gratissima
Fuistis: at simul senex
Terras reliquit, et beatas cœlitum
Petivit oras, incola
Vos alter occupavit, atque ferreus
Amabili vestro sinu
Me lacrimantem ejecit, et caris procul
Abire jussit finibus.
At nunc, amica rura, vos reddit mihi
FARNESII benignitas.
Jam vos revisam, jam juvabit arbores
Manu paternâ consitas
Videre; jam libebit in cubiculo
Molles inire somnulos,
Ubi senex solebat artus languidos
Molli fovere lectulo.
Gaudete fontes, rivulique limpidi!
Heri vetusti filius
Jamjam propinquat, vosque dulci fistulâ
Mulcebit, illâ fistulâ
Quam vestro IOLÆ donat Alcon maximus;
Ut incliti FARNESII
Laudes canentem Naiadum pulcher chorus
Miretur, et Pan capripes.

Sweet Villa! dear, delightful meads,
Scenes of my aged father's joys,—
From the calm bosom of your shades,
'Till fate remov'd him to the skies!

'Twas then, from your regretted bourne
A proud usurper bade me roam,
And drove me, lingering and forlorn,
An exile from my native home.

Farnese's bounty now again
Gives me to scenes so long endear'd;
Restores me to my lost domain,—
To groves my father's hands had rear'd:

Again, beneath my native cot
To taste the sweets of bland repose,
To mark, within the vocal grot,
My limpid rivulet as it flows.

Lov'd haunts! your shepherd's tuneful strain
Those wonted echoes soon shall hear;
The pipe that Alcon gave your swain,
Shall quickly speak its master near.

There, while Iolas' raptur'd song
Resounds Farnese's honoured name,
The listening Naiads round shall throng,
And Pan applaud the grateful theme.

We have reason to conjecture that the cardinal's generosity did not terminate here, but enabled Flaminio to enjoy his beloved

rural retreat in ease and affluence. (*c*) Indeed it appears that his illustrious Mæcenas entertained a very great regard for Flaminio, occasionally visited him in a friendly and familiar manner, and even retained him for a long time beneath his own roof. He is said to have obtained for him the appointment of secretary to the council of Trent, an office which Flaminio's infirm state of health prevented him from accepting.

See Memoirs of Fracastor. page 463.

We have already had occasion to notice the amicable and literary intercourse which Flaminio maintained with Bembo, and more especially with Fracastor, whose most intimate friends and associates appear to have been alike the friends of Flaminio. (*d*) He possessed in an equal degree the esteem of

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(*c*) " — Optatum dat habere agellum
Clara Farnesî pietas, gravique
Liberans curâ, jubet ociosam
Ducere vitam."
(Ad Apollinem.)

Thus in the following lines, where by Iolas the poet as usual characterises himself:

" Dilectus Phœbo, et Musis, sed pauper, Iolas
Et semper domini pascere suetus oves;
Nunc dives pecoris Farnesî munere factus,
Factus et illius munere dives agri:
Divino juveni, meritis pro talibus, ipsam
Et vocem, et calamos, ingeniumque dicat."

(*d*) To one of them, Franciscus Turrianus, Flaminius inscribes four books of his poems: the fifth is addressed to Cardinal Alexander Farnese. He was the author of a poetical version of part of the Psalms, and other devotional compositions. " Divinam Davidicorum Psalmorum majestatem primus (Flaminius) inter suos, cum aliquâ laude Latinis versibus expressit." *(Thuanus.)*

those, who for their moral excellencies or literary attainments, had been deservedly raised to the highest ecclesiastical dignities. He was long not only the associate, but the guest of cardinal Pole, who entertained the highest opinion of his talents, modesty, probity, and unfeigned piety; and in one of his letters, laments the death of Flaminio, in terms which breathe the most cordial esteem and friendship. (*e*)

Epist. Poli ad Victor. inter epist. Claror. Viror.

All accounts agree that Flaminio was of a very delicate habit, and laboured under an almost continual disorder of the stomach, which frequently incapacitated him for pursuing his studies with such intense application as he desired. To this infelicity of bodily temperament, and to the frequent returns of indisposition which he experienced, he occasionally alludes in his poems. One of these painful intervals probably suggested the following querulous lines:

(*e*) CARDINAL POLE was nearly related to the then reigning family in England. He was educated at Oxford. Afterwards passing over to the continent, his character for erudition, and his other qualifications soon introduced him to the intimacy of the most learned persons of the age. He was created a cardinal by Paul III. in 1536. He presided at the council of Trent; and at length returned to England, where he died a few hours after Queen Mary, in the fifty-ninth year of his age. In fact (if we may believe the editors of "Nouveau Dictionnaire Historique,") the shock which the news of the queen's death gave him, combined with the apprehensions which he felt for the interests of the Romish church, affected him so much, that having demanded his crucifix, which he devoutly embraced, he exclaimed, "Domine, salva nos, perimus! Salvator mundi, salva ecclesiam tuam!" and a short time afterwards expired.

AD SOMNUM.

Huc ades O bone Somne! veni dulcissime Somne!
Et mea furtivâ lumina claude manu.
Somne veni! en! volucres tibi dulcia carmina dicunt;
Invitat placido te vaga lympha sono.
Te violæ, te lilia pulchra, tuumque papaver,
Teque vocant plenis Cressia vina cadis.
Nec tamen ipse venis: quidnam, mitissime rerum,
Jam surdum precibus te facit esse meis?
Non ego vel fœdo maculavi crimine vitam,
Vel populi mores et malefacta sequor.
Si nescis, ego sum Musarum, Somne, sacerdos;
Nutriit in tenero me pia Musa sinu;
Et citharam dedit: hos dulces tibi condere versus
Jam meditor; properè tu modò Somne veni.
Ni properas, lethi sopor ingruit, et mea sævus
Lumina perpetuâ condere nocte parat.
Ergo age Somne, gradum celera, ne fama vagetur
Immeritum culpâ me periisse tuâ.
Nam si nulla meæ tangit te cura salutis,
At pareas famæ, si sapis, ipse tuæ.

TO SLEEP.

Come gentlest, sweetest sleep! my call obey;
Let thy light hand these eyelids close,
And kindly steal me from my woes:
Hither benignant, wing thy placid way.
Come sleep! for thee, in wild melodious lays,
Each bird exerts his soothing powers,
And warbles in the leafy bowers;
For thee yon rivulet murmurs as it strays:

For thee fond Flora decks these verdant fields,
The lily pale, the violet blows;
Here thy own poppies breathe repose,
And the rich vine oblivious nectar yields.
Still dost thou linger? — Bland restorer, say
Why thus deny me balmy rest?
No guilty horrors haunt my breast,
Nor wont my feet with devious crowds to stray.
Learn, gentle SLEEP, who asks thy influence mild,
A blameless votary of the Nine,
Ordain'd to deck the Muse's shrine,
Nurs'd in their haunts, and deem'd their favour'd child.
To me the lyre they gave, the tuneful strain;
And thus thy genial power to sing,
Grateful I'll strike the warbling string:
Then haste thou SLEEP! nor still my suit disdain.
Haste, to my aid, kind SLEEP! indulgent come,
Ere death o'er all my senses steal,
Ere endless night these eyelids seal,
And fate consign me to the dreary tomb.
Ah! deign relief:—though deaf to misery's cry,
Untouch'd with pity, yet beware
Lest fame to future times declare
That thou unpitying, doom'dst a bard to die.

The decease of Flaminius happened at Rome A. D. 1550, in the fifty-seventh year of his age. It is said that Cardinal Caraffi, afterwards elevated to the pontificate by the name of Paul IV. having some doubts respecting his orthodoxy, and wishing from motives of friendship, to contribute to his establishment in the faith, administered to him the last religious offices prescribed by the church.

The delicate verses of Flaminius, "De Delio,"

" O fons Melioli sacer," &c.

have obtained deserved celebrity, as a peculiarly happy imitation of the much admired *canzone* of Petrarca,

" Chiare, fresche, e dolci acque," &c.

His Latin style is highly commended for its purity, and his poems in general, combine a graceful facility of manner, and an agreeable turn of expression, with such a degree of spirit as renders them more than ordinarily interesting.

MARCI ANTONII FLAMINII

HYMNUS IN AURORAM.

Ecce ab extremo veniens Eoo
Roscidas Aurora refert quadrigas,
Et sinu lucem roseo nitentem
Candida portat.

Ite pallentes tenebræ sub Orcum;
Ite, quæ totâ mihi nocte diros
Manium vultus, mihi dira semper
Somnia fertis.

Da lyram vati puer; ipse flores
Sparge, dum canto: Bona Diva, salve,
Quæ tuo furvas radiante terras
Lumine lustras.

En! tibi suaves violas, crocumque,
En! odorati calathos amomi:
Surgit, & nostros tibi dulcis aura
Portat odores:

Deferat laudes utinam precesque,
Quas tibi supplex mea Musa fundit,
Jam pio sanctos benè docta divos
Tollere cantu.

Quis tuam dignè celebrare lucem
Possit, ô almæ genitrix diei;
Quis tuam formam, ô DEA ante Divas
Pulchrior omnes?

Ut genas cœlo roseas, comamque
Auream profers, tibi fulva cedunt
Astra, decedit rutilante victa
Luna decore.

Te sine, æternâ jaceant sepulti
Nocte mortales; sine te nec ullus
Sit color rebus, neque vita doctas
Culta per artes.

Tu gravem pigris oculis soporem
Excutis; lethi sopor est imago;
Evocans tectis sua quemque lætum ad
Munia mittis.

Exilit stratis rapidus viator;
Ad jugum fortes redeunt juvenci;
Lætus in sylvam properat, citato
Cum grege, pastor.

Ast amans charæ thalamum puellæ
Deserit flens, & tibi verba dicit
Aspera, amplexu teneræ cupito a-
vulsus amicæ.

Ille amet noctis latebras dolosæ,
Me juvet semper bona lux; nitentem
Da mihi lucem, DEA MAGNA, longos
Cernere in annos.

ODE TO MORNING.

IN BLUSHING beams of soften'd light
AURORA steals upon the sight:
With chaste effulgence dart from far
The splendours of her dewy car;
Cheer'd with the view, I bless the ray
That mildly speaks returning day.

Retire, ye gloomy shades, to spread
Your brooding horrors o'er the dead;—
Bane of my slumbers, spectres gaunt,
Forbear my frighted couch to haunt!
Phantoms of darkness, horrid dreams,
Begone! for lo! fair MORNING beams.

Emerging from the incumbent shade,
Her lustre cheers the brilliant mead:—
Haste, boy,—the tuneful lyre,—I long
To meet the goddess with a song;—
Haste, while the Muse exerts her powers,
And strew her smiling path with flowers.

The violet, charg'd with early sweets,
Fair MORN! thy cheerful presence greets;

The crocus lifts her saffron head,
And bloomy shrubs their odours shed;
Ah! deign our incense to inhale
Borne on the gently-swelling gale.

When MORNING's charms the song inspire,
Be mine to wake the warbling lyre;
Oh! waft, ye breezes, to her ear
The mingled strains of praise and prayer:
Bid her approve our faint essays,
And teach the offer'd gift to please.

For ah! thy beauties to pourtray,
Fair mother of the infant day,—
What time in mildest splendours drest
Thy lucid form appears confest,—
Still must the admiring bard despair,—
O Nymph—superlatively fair!

Thy crimson cheeks a blush disclose
More vivid than the opening rose;
Thy softly-waving locks unfold
More lustre than the burnish'd gold;
The envious stars their lights resign,
And Luna's beam is lost in thine.

Mortals had lain, without thine aid,
Ingulph'd in night's perpetual shade:
The brightest colours but display
A lustre borrow'd from thy ray;
And every grace that art can boast
Without thy genial help were lost.

Fast bound in Lethe's dull embrace,
'Tis thine the sluggard to release;
Thou wak'st to life the torpid mind,
To deathful slumbers else consign'd:
And pleas'd to share thy tranquil smile,
Man with new vigour meets his toil.

Betimes the sprightly traveller wakes:
The sturdy ox his stall forsakes,
Patient his sinewy neck to bow,
And bear the yoke, and drag the plough:
His fleecy charge the shepherd leads
To graze beneath the sylvan shades.

Lull'd in his fair one's gentle arms,
The lover if thy voice alarms;
If with regret the attractive couch
He leaves, and blames thy near approach,
Still let him deem thy call unkind,
And cast the "lingering look behind."

His be the illusive joys of night;
My boast shall be the chearful light:
Give me to watch the orient ray,
And hail the glad return of day;—
And long, oh! long—ye Pow'rs divine,
May such reviving joys be mine!

AD MARCUM.

JAM luculentâ, MARCE, pecuniâ
Tumultuosum per mare cursitans
Quam comparâsti, disce tandem
Disce, precor, sapienter uti.

Nam congerendis divitiis modus
Hic esse debet, pauperiem ut tibi
Tuisque liberis repellens,
Lætus agas superest quod ævi.

Ergo relictis navibus, et mari,
Ad tuta ruris te refer ocia;
Insanientis et procellæ
Dirum alii paveant furorem.

Quis non benignæ culta nitentia
Terræ minaci præferat Adriæ?
Quis candido gregi catervas
Comparet horribiles natantûm?

Quod si lucellum te capit;—et sua
Sunt lucra gnavis agricolis, pecus
Saltusque, et arva diligenti
Sunt domino benè fructuosa.

Nam térra mater reddere diligit
Magno colenti semina fœnore,
Ni tu recusas illam aratro
Assiduisque juvare rastris.

Est hìc agellus, villaque collibus
Fundata amœnis, quam liquidi ambiunt

Fontes, et arcens umbrâ opacâ
Silva canis orientis æstum.

His tu cöemptis incipe tempora
Post longa tandem vivere, conjugis
In dulcis amplexu daturus
Lætam animam veniente letho.

TO MARCUS.

MARCUS! who long hast plow'd the main,
At length repress this thirst of gain;
As prudence bids, thy wealth employ,
And of thy toils the fruits enjoy.

Thou, and thy offspring lov'd, secure
From penury's gripe, 'twere wisdom sure
To banish anxious cares, and give
To bliss the span thou hast to live.

Quit then thy bark: the billowy wave
Consent for rural haunts to leave:
Let others dare old Neptune's reign,
And brave the tempest's rage insane.

Who would the champaign's verdant green
Forego for Adria's troublous scene?
Or madly slight the fleecy brood,
To bay the monsters of the flood?

Yet if for gain thou ceaseless pine,
The peasant's surer wealth be thine:
Here shall the forest and the field,
Grateful, a plenteous tribute yield.

True to thy hopes the parent soil
Luxuriant, shall reward thy toil:
Scatter but thou the seeds, nor spare
The harrow and industrious share.

Inviting, see! its subject lands,
The villa's pleasant front commands:
See limpid streams, and shady bow'rs,
To skreen thee in the autumnal hours.

Haste then! thy treasur'd hoards unclose,
Here gladly purchase late repose:
And midst a wife's endearments wait,
Resign'd, the summons of thy fate.

MEMOIRS

OF

THE AMALTHEI.

VOS, VATUM STUDIOSA COHORS! VOS INCLYTA VIRTUS
ATTOLLET, PRISCIS ÆMULA TEMPORIBUS.

ZANCHIUS.

THE AMALTHEI (HIERONYMUS, JOANNES BAPTISTA, and CORNELIUS) were brothers, who flourished in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, and distinguished themselves as men of letters. The place of their birth was ODERZO, a city of the Venetian territory. Hieronymus, the eldest, united in his own person the characters of a skilful physician, and a pleasing poet. His Latin poems are in general written in a style of singular elegance and purity. The celebrated French critic and commentator Marc-Antoine Muret, in his cor-

respondence with Lambin, classes them among the best productions of the Italians, in that species of composition. (*a*) In poems of the light and epigrammatic kind, he particularly excelled. Of these the following, entitled "The Hour-glass" or "The Tomb of Alcippus," is amongst the most admired.

(*a*) Marc-Antoine Muret, who ranks among the Latin poets of France, was born near Limoges, A. D. 1526. He is said, principally by his own application, to have attained the critical knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages for which he was distinguished. He taught in various colleges and seminaries of education, and was remarkable for the vivacity of his disposition, and a certain pointed quickness of reproof, which enabled him to repress the undue forwardness of his pupils. Charges of a serious nature, the justice of which is however disputed, obliged him to flee from his native country. It is related of him, that as he travelled towards Italy in disguise, he fell sick at an inn; and the physicians of the place, ignorant of the quality of their patient, proposed to each other to try upon him a medicine, the effect of which had not been fully ascertained. "Faciamus experimentum in corpore vili;" which words being overheard by the professor, speedily operated his cure, without further medical assistance. This eminent scholar, who distinguished himself as a commentator on classic authors, a miscellaneous writer, and a Latin poet, died in 1585, in the sixtieth year of his age. Many curious particulars concerning Muret, may be found in the *Anti-Baillet* of *Menage, part* i. *p.* 283 *et seqq. à Amsterdam.* 1725, *in* 12mo. See also *Thuani Hist.* and *Nouveau Dictionnare Historique.*

Denys Lambin, another celebrated commentator, was born at Montreuil sur mer, in Picardy. His profound erudition and scrupulous exactness as a collector of various readings, are acknowledged; but some have blamed his unauthorized and frequently injudicious freedoms in correcting the text of his authors. He occasionally united his critical labours with those of Muret. Lambin was Greek professor in the College Royale at Paris. He died in 1572.

DE HOROLOGIO PULVEREO.

Perspicuus vitro pulvis qui dividit horas,
Dum vagus angustum sæpe recurrit iter,
Olim erat Alcippus, qui Gallæ ut vidit ocellos,
Arsit, et est subitò factus ab igne cinis.
Irrequiete cinis! miseros testabere amantes
More tuo nullâ posse quiete frui. (*b*)

Through that perspicuous vase the tiny shower
That ceaseless falls, and marks the passing hour,
Alcippus was,—by Galla's glances fir'd
Who burn'd despairing, and in dust expir'd.
Ill-fated dust! thy restless motion shews
That death itself to love denies repose.

This learned man is also much commended for his urbanity of manners, and the suavity of his disposition. He cultivated his talent for poetry at an advanced age with undiminished spirit, as appears in his verses to his friend Melchior, notwithstanding the complaint which they breathe of decaying powers: Vid. Thuanum in Elog.

(*b*) The following which Warton (*Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope: vol.* i. *p.* 289) terms the most justly celebrated of modern epigrams, originated also from the pen of Hieronymus Amaltheus:

De Acone et Leonillâ.

Lumine Acon dextro, capta est Leonilla sinistro,
Et potis est formâ vincere uterque Deos;
Blande puer, lumen quod habes concede sorori,
Sic tu cæcus Amor, sic erit illa Venus.

(*Vide Carm. Illustr. Poet. Ital. et Trium Fratrum Amaltheorum Carmina.*)

Per juga, per rupes, per celsa cacumina Pindi,
Veloci nimiùm dum pede curris iter,
Me tua servantem lento vestigia gressu,
Melchior! expecta: Melchior! affer opem:
Neve cadam in præceps, tremulo mihi porrige dextram;
En! titubant fessi languida crura senis.
Quod si fortè meæ superest spes nulla salutis,
Et sum Lethæas ebibiturus aquas,
Ah! querulo saltem defle mea funera cantu,
Et mea lugubri carmine fata geme.
Nam si me exanimem citharâ cantabis eburnâ,
Post obitum, invitâ morte, superstes ero.

O'er rocks, o'er wild cliffs, to proud Pindus' height
You urge, my friend, impetuous urge your way;
In pity, oh! repress your arduous flight,
And deign to feeble age a transient stay.

Breathless I follow,—see! I tottering stand
On the tremendous verge, whose height appals
The trembling votary; stretch the assisting hand,
Or now, oh! now—your fainting suppliant falls.

But if no friendly hand avail to save
Me sinking fast to fate's oblivious bourne,
And doom'd to taste of Lethe's torpid wave;
Be thine at least my hapless lot to mourn.

Melchior! if thou in pity to my fall
To dirge funereal strike thy polish'd lyre,
Me, spite of fate, the numbers shall recal,
And bid my name to deathless praise aspire.

Hieronymus Amaltheus died at the place of his nativity, in 1574, in his sixty-eighth

year. His fellow-citizens are said to have inscribed an epitaph on his tomb, in which they represent him as another Apollo, equally skilled in poesy and the healing art. His poems, together with those of his brothers, were first collected and published entire by Hieronymus Alexander at Venice, in the year 1627, and afterwards by Grævius with those of Sannazarius at Amsterdam, in 1689.

The poetical talents of GIOVANNI, the second brother, were not inferior to those of Girolamo. We remark in his compositions equal harmony, combined with equal spirit; and critics have united them under the flattering title of "Musarum Deliciæ." Besides the poems written in Latin, others by Giovanni Battista occur in his native language, which rank him among the best Italian poets. (*c*) Some unfinished pieces of his are said to have been discovered at Rome, in the library of Cardinal Ottoboni.

Eminently distinguished for his accurate knowledge of the Greek and Latin languages, he passed the greatest part of his life at the court of Rome, and stood high in the favour of three successive pontiffs. He discharged the office of secretary to the cardinals who were deputed to the council of Trent. We have Giovanni's own evidence to prove that he was thus enabled to attain, if not to the most splendid and imposing affluence, at least to that moderate degree of it, which combined

(*c*) His Italian poems, we are informed, occur in various collections. They may be found in the "Rime di diversi et eccellentissimi autori." 8vo. *In Venetia.* 1550.

with temperance and integrity, conduces most to real happiness:

J. Bapt. Amaltheus ad Torquatum.

"Me quoque ut incertam scirem contemnere sortem,
Atque auri pretium infelix, finxére Camœnæ
Gaudentem censu, puro qui splendeat usu.
Percurrant alii sinuosis æquora velis,
Eooque legant ardentes littore gemmas;
Ipse, nisi attonitæ mihi sit mens conscia culpæ,
Intra naturæ fines regnare beatus
Dicar, et insanis animum subducere curis."

He died at Rome, at the early age of forty-seven years.

I had rather the following little poem should be considered as an argument of the poet's affluence, than of his intemperance. It would be unfair to form rash conclusions, or even to suppose that it proves any thing absolutely, except the author's talents for poetical description.

JOANNIS BAPTISTÆ AMALTHEI

PATERA.

Compare Ode 17 of Anacreon, edition of Barnes.

Non mihi Pleïadas, non lucida plaustra Böotæ,
Stellarumve choros—pictisve in nubibus Irim,
Nec solem rutilum patera cælavit in aureâ,
Docta manus,—Myos artifices imitata figuras,
Sed nemora, et teneris distinctas floribus herbas,
Et graciles hederas mitesque in vitibus uvas,
Et circumflexos argento effinxit acanthos.
Addidit et rupis prognatum vertice fontem,
Et perlucentes liquido sub fonte lapillos,
Artis opus miræ, medioque ex aggere Nymphas
Candida virgineo nectentes brachia ludo.
Parte aliâ sub vite sacer procumbit Iacchus,
Ebria cui lentus natat intra lumina somnus,

Ante pedes thyrsi, redimitaque tela corymbis,
Delapsæque jacent neglecto è crine corollæ.
Inter se vigiles Mareotica vina ministrant
Ludentes Satyri passim, projectaque rident
Serta Dei; credas diffuso ex ore cachinnos
Excipere, et dulces Nympharum audire susurros.
Hinc, infusa novo semper mihi nectare vina
Mutat inauratâ crater argenteus ansâ
Longaque sollicitis affert oblivia curis.

No twinkling Pleïads, nor the shining wain,
And varied labours of the zodiack train,
Nor radiant Iris with her painted bow
Art on my golden vase hath taught to glow.
It speaks the sculptor's imitative powers
Display'd in shady groves, and meads, and flowers:
With mingled ivy, and the creeping vine,
Around its verge he bade the acanthus shine.
Here, fast descending from the sloping hill,
'Mid glittering pebbles falls the lucid rill;
While there, descriptive of the master's powers,
The sportive Nymphs beguile the rural hours,
And in the light gay dance their hands combine.—
Beneath his tree the rosy God of wine
At ease recumbent lolls; his swimming eyes
Oblivious slumbers ready to surprise:—
His thyrsus there, with ivy-berries wound,
And falling chaplet strew the flow'ry ground.
Light Satyrs here—their wakeful revels hold
And quaff the vinous juice in cups of gold:—
See how the wanton train—to life ally'd,
The scatter'd emblems of the God deride—
While the broad laugh bursts ever unreprest,
And playful Nymphs retort the whisper'd jest!

Hence pour'd, and mantling on the dazzled view,
The sparkling wine is seen to change its hue,

As from a cup of burnish'd silver wrought,
With handle gilt,—I drain the ambrosial draught—
That oft the failing spring of joy repairs,
And gives a long oblivion to my cares.

Cornelius, the youngest of the Amalthei, has left a few Latin poems, which serve to manifest the conformity of his taste and talents with those of his learned brothers. He probably died in the prime of life, and some accounts fix the decease of all the three brothers in the same year.

DI M. GIOVANNI BATTISTA AMALTHEO.

Pastor felice! che dal vulgo errante
Lontano stai tra fresche ombrose valli,
Ne d' imperio ti cal, ne di Fortuna;
Tu dentro il bel soggiorno hai sempre avante
Vaghi, correnti, e lucidi cristalli:
Ne ti rompe il riposo invidia alcuna:
Ne trista nube imbruna
L' aria de tuoi fioriti colli aprici.
Vedi gli armenti a lor sentieri usati,
Pascendo i verdi prati,
Errar per le contrade alme e felici,
Mentre in riposte e solitarie rive
Inviti co' l tuo canto l' aure estive.
Teco la greggia, e teco stassi Amore:
Teco la tua leggiadra Pastorella
Le rime alterna, e scopre i suoi desiri:
Hor nel tuo sen comparte 'l sonno, e l' hore:
Hor de la fronte l' una, e l' altra stella
In te rivolge con soavi giri;
E di caldi sospiri,
E di pietose voci il ciel percote.
Qual celeste piacer, felice Iola,
T' ingombra, quando sola

Duolsi Leucippe in quelle dolci note
Di non veder del foco, che l' infiamma,
Accesa nel tuo core ancho pur dramma ?
Poi che l' ardenti fiamme a lei rivele,
Che ti consuman si soavemente ;
Ella da pietà vinta il duol acqueta,
Et affrena i sospiri, e le querele.
Cosi tutta di gran vaghezza ardente
Di speme si riempie ; e 'n vista lieta
Stassene humile, e queta.
Poi si risveglia a l' amorose tempre :
O di fioretti un' odorato nembo
Versa sovra il tuo grembo,
Cantando, come teco gia contempre
Amor ogni desire, ogni sua gioia ;
E come al tuo apparir fugga ogni noia.
Fortunato Pastor ! a te si veste
La selva di piu altere, e ricche fronde :
A te largo di fior tributo rende
La terra : & al tuo canto l' aure deste
Rasserenano il cielo, acquetan l' onde,
E nulla mai tanto diletto offende,
E nulla mai contende
Conformi effetti a lieti pensier tuoi.
Non avaro desio ti morde, o preme ;
Ne faticosa speme
Ti sospinge dal Tago a i liti Eoi
Dietro a fallace ben, che 'l tempo certo
N' envola, e stato ne promette incerto.
Felice Iola ! tu la selva, e 'l monte
Tu le secrete piagge, e le campagne,
Ove ti guida Amor vai ricercando.
Et hor sotto un bel faggio, hor presso a un fonte
Teco hai Leucippe, da cui non scompagne
I passi, e l' orme : e vai con lei membrando,
U' fosti colto, e quando,
Dal leggiadro suo vago portamento :

Hor in schietti arboscelli il nome stampi
Onde si lieto avampi.
Crescon le piante: e tu pago, e contento
Senti crescer insieme i vostri amori,
E 'n un medesmo foco arder duo cori.
Felice Iola! alhor che parte 'l giorno,
Lasciando i fonti, e la frondosa chiostra,
La mansueta schiera altrove meni;
Poi la richiami a l' usato soggiorno,
Tosto, ch' al nostro cielo il Sol si mostra.
Ivi non temi che i dì tuoi sereni,
E di dolcezza pieni
Turbi di dolor nebbia, o di paura:
Depinge il tuo terren mattino, e sera,
Continua Primavera,
Ne vi si vede intorno l' aria oscura;
Anzi piu chiara, e temperata luce,
E piu tranquillo ciel sempre riluce.
Marmi, loggie, theatri, e gemme, & oro,
E quanto il cieco mondo honora, e brama,
Contento di te sol, odi e dispregi:
Che non ricchi palazzi di thesoro
Riposo danno a chi gli apprezza, & ama:
Ne gli alti tetti de superbi regi,
Ne gli honorati fregi
Hanno sbandite le noiose cure.
Sopra un fiorito seggio adhora adhora
Sentendo la dolce ora,
E 'l grato mormorar de l' acque pure,
Queti & appaghi il cor di tal vaghezza,
Ch' ogni altra ti parria minor dolcezza.
Canzon tra i fiori, e l' herba
Un bel Pastor solinga troverai,
A cui le chiare fonti invidio, e 'l colle,
Che mi nasconde, e tolle
Amor non satio de miei lunghi guai:
Con lui riponti; e fuggi la vil turba,
Che per soverchie voglie il ben perturba.

SHEPHERD! who fliest the din of towns, to tread
The lone cool freshness of the leafy dale,
Where winds translucent o'er its crystal bed
The stream low-murm'ring; where no storms assail
Thy cot, secure from each disastrous gale:
No cloud malignant o'er thy uplands low'rs,
Gilded with genial suns, and gay with scattered flowers.

Blest SWAIN! from envy, from ambition freed,
With thee thy flocks pursue their wonted way,
Crop the sweet verdure of the smiling mead,
Or unrestricted o'er the herbage stray.
Meantime thou wak'st thy solitary lay,
Where some cool stream meandring steals along,
And woo'st the noontide breeze with thy melodious song.

Well pleas'd thy flock,—well pleas'd his station near
LOVE smiling keeps; whilst in impassion'd guise
To thy soft strain LEUCIPPE lends an ear,
Or, in a strain as sweet, to thine replies:
Whilst on thy breast reposing, her bright eyes
Now fix on thine their fond, enamour'd gaze,
Now veil in slumbers bland, their rapture-beaming rays.

Happy the conscious gales that oft attest
Your mutual sighs, your vows of faith sincere;
But if some secret doubts the fair molest;
If, not unheard, to ease her tender care,
She tell in wild notes to the desart air
How cold thy passion: how unlike the flame
That with intenser glow pervades her gentle frame;

Thy ardent vows renew'd, thy pleasing pain,
With LOVE's soft eloquence inforc'd, she hears;

The charming accents easy credence gain,
And smiles supplant her jealousies and fears:
Now Hope each love-illumin'd feature cheers;
Hope o'er each charm a brighter lustre throws,
And bids her throbbing breast in sweetest peace repose.

Again, as LOVE inspires, in accents kind,
To harmony she wakes each tuneful power,
Or for her SWAIN, by fancy's hand combin'd,
Selects the pride of every blooming flower,
And scents thy bosom with a perfum'd shower:
Feels from each saddening gloom her heart set free,
And owns its fondest wish supremely blest in thee.

Blest SWAIN! the woods to thy enraptur'd view
A broader shade, a livelier green display;
Spangled with flowers of every varied hue
Earth teems; and sooth'd with thy enchanting lay
O'er the calm deep the lingering zephyrs play;
Serener skies with cloudless lustre shine,
And emulous of thy bliss, creation smiles benign.

Those shores, o'er golden sands where Tagus flows,
Thou haunt'st not: no insatiate thirst of gain
Prompts thee through arduous toils that interpose,
For India's wealth with enterprize insane
To plow, in fragile bark, the stormy main.
Vain gifts! which oft the fleeting hour that lends
Resumes; ere Life's spent thread the dream of greatness ends.

With LOVE your guide, you range the sylvan shade,
Tread the green plains, or climb the sunny brows,
And mark each bower, where in the tangled glade
He most delights to breathe his secret vows:
And oft beneath some beech's spreading boughs,

Oft by the fountain's grassy margent, share
The joys of converse sweet, an undivided pair.

Now dwells on present bliss your rapturous theme,
Now scenes of transport past recals to mind;
When first subdued, IOLAS own'd his flame,
And to the enchantress fair his heart resign'd:
Now with her name each scion's tender rind
He inscribes—well pleas'd to mark their growth, as grows
The fire that in two breasts with one effulgence glows.

Thrice happy SHEPHERD, warn'd by parting day
The founts you leave; you leave the woodland choirs,
Your fleecy charge the welcome call obey,
And each lorn straggler to the fold retires;
Theirs bland repose, and yours, till morn's mild fires,
Presaging suns still bright, the nightly gloom
Dispel, and bid your steps their wonted haunts resume.

Still wing'd with pleasure flit your guileless hours,
Still your life's devious current flows serene:
No terrors thrill your breasts, nor ever low'rs
With care o'ercast, your heaven's attemper'd scene:
Spring decks your seasons with perennial green:
With brighter lustre beams each passing day,
And each returning sun sheds yet a kinder ray.

The PORTICO with sculptur'd grace design'd,
The gilded THEATRE's illusive show,
The CITY's pomp that strikes each vulgar mind:
The blaze of wealth and splendour you forego
For joys that from securer sources flow:
Joys self-deriv'd, which not the shining hoard
Can give, nor the vain state of potentates afford:

Theirs brooding care (for can the purple vest,
  Can palaces of kings, or boundless sway
Banish the fiend, or chase his frown unblest?)
  Thy seat the turf, with flowers and verdure gay,
  Where murm'ring waters soothe the livelong day,
Thou liv'st to rapture unalloy'd; nor thine
Would'st or for other scenes, or other hopes resign.

Go then my SONG, amidst his green retreats,
  Go thou and seek the solitary swain,
Tell how I long to share his rural sweets,
  His hills and ripling streams;—but LOVE, my bane,
  Forbids, unsoften'd with my lasting pain.
Refug'd with him, fly thou the crowd unwise
That for superfluous cares would barter sterling joys.

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Page 10 *line* 5 *for* capsule *read* calyx
63 *line* 6 *for* kindnes *read* kindness
104 *line* 7 *ab imâ for* νεμη; *read* νεμη,
114 *line* 4 *for* who am I *read* who I am
167 *line* 26 viresque, *sic legitur in Ed. Aldinâ, sed fortasse legendum* vicesque
175 *line* 5 *ab imâ for* εμβαλη *read* εμβαλε
196 *line* 2 *for* that of truth to *read* to truth that of
199 *line* 5, 6 *for* longer called *read* longer be called
225 *line* 24 perhaps, *dele the comma*
372 *line* 3 *ab imâ for* Heyne *read* Haym
382 *line* 18 *for* remembrance *read* reverence
408 *line* 11 *for* herbs *read* herb
416 *line* 3 *for* Urbina *read* Urbino
424 *line* 7 *ab imâ for* time P. Jovius *read* time when P. Jovius
426 *line* 10 *ab imâ for* discussions *read* dissensions
427 *line* 19 *ab imâ for* Lorrain *read* Louvain
441 *Marginal Note for* Expliquèe. Prem. *read* Expliquèe Tom. 5. Prem.

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